Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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POLL RESULTS

Do you support the proposed relocation of all adult businesses to a portion of Middle Road?

Yes-**39**

No-**44**

Another location-**24**

Sunday, August 17, 2008

I N S I D E

Split On Abortion

Presidential contenders Barack Obama and John McCain differed sharply on abortion Saturday, with McCain saying a baby's human rights begin "at conception," while Obama restated his support for legalized abortion.

Nation...Page 15

Unlikely Inspiration

Sure, Madonna may have scandalized the Vatican and shocked nearly every parent in America at some point during her long and provocative career full of shrewd image transformations.

Life & Style... Page 19

Legislature seeks re-examination of Superior Court structure. **PAGE 2**

Hyatt Regency's environmental awareness campaign launched. **PAGE 3**

Benedetto stepping down

"I have learned a lot from my colleagues in Interior, from those within the local government with whom I have worked so closely, and from the many, many workers who have shared their experiences with me over the years. We have all accomplished a lot together."

— Federal ombudsman James Benedetto

WAITING GAME JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Shadows of children of nonresident workers are seen waiting for their parents during a recent meeting about the release of the long delayed federal economic stimulus checks at the American Memorial Park amphitheater.

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

James Benedetto will be stepping down from his position as federal ombudsman.

Benedetto confirmed to *Saipan Tribune* yesterday speculations he is resigning.

See BENEDETTO on Page 4

Mom, daughter lead Kenyan village in AIDS recovery

By BARBARA BORST
SPECIAL TO THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RABUOR, Kenya (AP)—Loyce Mbewa-Ong'udi was late. Family and friends milled around her parents' house in the green hills overlooking Lake Victoria, waiting for the daughter from America to return home.

At last the taxi bounced over the ruts

See MOM on Page 4

AP

Grace Odhiambo, one of the teachers at Rabuor Nursery School, in Rabuor village, Kenya is shown in June 2008, leading the children in song during morning assembly.

Most PSS principals lack certification

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

The new school year nears with only four Public School System principals meeting the requirement to obtain an Administra-

See MOST on Page 4

Official urges immediate shutdown of Power Plant 1

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A concerned power plant official has urged for the immediate shutdown of the engines at Power Plant 1 in Lower Base as he corroborated Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's warning of possible explosion in the facility.

See POWER on Page 4

Local

Legislature seeks re-examination of Superior Court structure

As Senate committees take no action on Inos' appointment

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Senate Committees on Executive Appointments and Government Investigations and Fiscal Affairs have returned with no action the appointment of attorney Perry Inos as an associate judge in order for the government save money in light of the declining courts' caseload and the dwindling CNMI revenues.

EAGI chair Sen. Paterno S. Hocog and Fiscal Affairs and EAGI member Sen. Frica T. Pangelinan likewise asked the Legislature and the CNMI people for a re-examination of the structural make-up of the Superior Court considering the significant reduction of cases and the government revenues.

In their report to Senate President Pete P. Reyes, Hocog and Pangelinan, however, pointed out that the position of the committees is that Inos is still qualified to be appointed again in the future should a provision in the NMI Constitution not be modified and an assessment of the government's general fund resources allows for the funding of the fifth judge.

"Your committees respectfully assert that the proper time for the examination is now, prior to the potential confirmation of a judge of the Superior Court who would enjoy a protected six-year term with a guaranteed annual salary," Pangelinan and Hocog reported to Reyes.

The committees noted that should the number of judges be reduced, any temporary spike in caseload could be handled by the appointment of judges pro tem as contemplated by the CNMI Constitution.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial appointed Inos on June 19, 2008, as judge following the resignation of Juan T. Lizama. The Rota lawyer earlier had expressed confidence that the Senate would soon affirm his appointment.

EAGI has yet to examine Inos's submissions, education, credential, community involvements, business experiences, financial statements, or the public's concerns.

The CNMI Constitution requires that the Superior Court consist of five judges. This five-judge "floor" was added to the constitution by amendment 23 during the Second Constitutional Convention.

EAGI noted that recently the Judiciary has experienced a reduction in the number of cases filed and requiring decision.

EAGI cited the "most telling fact" that in 2000, 12,235 total cases were filed whereas in 2007 only 5,630 cases were filed due to declining population of the NMI.

The committee also pointed to the Law Revision Commission's webpage that indicated that in 2000 the Superior Court published 42 decisions while in 2007 only 20 were published.

"By any measure (excepting family cases), it appears that the Judiciary is not entertaining the number of cases as it has in the recent past. Your Committee, finds this an opportune time to attempt to reduce government expenditures, and notes that this is in line with efforts which occurred prior to the appointment of Mr. Perry B. Inos," EAGI said.

The Fiscal Affairs committee on the other hand, noted that despite the NMI's economic troubles, the administration continues to hire new government employees.

"This is a cause for great concern, given the size of the CNMI's current fiscal deficit," Fiscal Affairs committee chair Pangelinan said.

Pangelinan stressed that these concerns predate the appointment of Inos and have nothing to do with his qualifications for the position.

"It is everything to do with reigning in the government spending," she said.

At present, there are four judges in the Superior Court. Each associate judge currently earns a base yearly salary of $120,000. This number does not include retirement fund obligations.

Pangelinan said each chamber consists of at least two employees: a clerk and a law clerk, each of which are entitled to base salaries as well as retirement obligations.

Law clerks, the senator said, are normally hired from outside the CNMI and traditionally employing them includes costs for moving personal belongings and a house rental allowance for the duration of their stay.

The Judicial Branch submitted a budget request of $5.31 million for Fiscal Year 2009. Fitial's budget submission proposes only $4.035 million for Judicial Branch.

"This represents an approximate $1.3 million shortfall," Pangelinan said, adding that even with a 10 percent reduction in the judiciary's budget allocation, a deficit of $1.3 million would still exist.

The senator quoted Chief Justice Miguel Demapan in his recent state of the judiciary address in which he stated that, after already experiencing budget cuts, the judicial branch cannot afford more than 10 percent budget reduction without adversely affecting the qualify of justice in the CNMI.

Saipan Tribu
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PTI would like to remind its customers that payments not received by close of business on August 20th, will result in temporary suspension of all telephone services after 6:00 p.m. on that day. To prevent temporary suspension, customers must pay their bills on or before August 20th.
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Hyatt Regency's environmental awareness campaign launched

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR
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REPORTER

With the current power crisis affecting the business community, Hyatt Regency Saipan's launching of its environmental awareness campaign or "Go Green" drive is both crucial and timely.

This according to the Garapan landmark's marketing communications assistant Le Shen during Saturday's kickoff activity at the American Memorial Park, where the hotel's employees and their families were seen picking up trash and repainting picnic sites and other facilities there.

Shen said it's not just an opportunity for managers and rank-and-file employees and their families to mingle but it is part of their company's commitment to take care of the planet.

Shen explained that they have always wanted to incorporate the campaign in their business strategy but they have guidelines to follow, meaning environmental concerns must be the main goal in this activity.

"We're doing our share to find ways in addressing these environmental issues that affects all humanity," she said.

Such guidelines are set by Hyatt Earth committee, an initiative by the Global Hyatt Corporation, one if the world's premier hotel companies with properties in 45 countries, operates 368 hotels worldwide and currently has properties under development on five continents.

On Saipan alone, the total number of employees is 280.

Shen explained that this activity is a private initiative and the next step is for them to join other companies for similar environmental awareness campaign.

"It's hard at the start because of the funds involved but as you can see all of us are having fun," she said.

The hotel just recently formed committees composed of employees from operations and executive department that would implement hotel-wide programs to create environmental awareness and decrease impacts.

They came up with "Family of Responsible and Caring Employees (FORCE), which will focus on initiatives for water and energy management and conservation, waste reduction and recycling, and staff and community awareness campaigns.

Earlier in a press statement, general manager Nick Nishikawa explained that their goal is to constantly invest in the protection of the environment, which they predict will have a long lasting impact on the community as well.

Nishikawa was seen joining the repainting activities along with other department heads

The activity was initiated by the Green Team campaign, which was created by the Communication and Awareness committee chaired by Josephine Mesta.

KOREAN DANCE CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
A Korean dance team performed at Jesus Glory Presbyterian Church in As Lito as well as Street Market last Thursday, Aug. 14.

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MOM

From Page 1

and made a sharp turn into the compound of small brick and stucco houses. Loyce sprang out to a shower of greetings in the Luo language, hugs, helping hands for 12 enormous suitcases crammed with anti-AIDS medicines, asthma inhalers, storybooks, pencils and sharpeners, recycled eyeglasses.

The supplies were for the Rabuor Village Project, which Loyce runs. In the crowd, she sought the woman who started it all: her mother, Rosemell Ong'udi.

This is the story of a village, spurred by two extraordinary women, rising from the depths of the AIDS epidemic to build a future for itself. In 10 years, with hardly any international aid, this poor farming community has founded a nursery school and feeding program, a pharmacy, a youth group and income-generating projects. The work touches more than 10,000 people in 10 villages and keeps growing.

But it's not just a list of projects; it's a change of heart. Rabuor's work embodies what experts consider the most effective approach to development: "community-owned" programs in which residents, not just donors, set the priorities, and change comes from the bottom up.

District Commissioner Godfrey Kigochi, senior Kenya government official for Kisumu West, says he wishes he had a project like this in every village. Organizations that give money or lend expertise to the Rabuor project—Slum Doctors, Lift Kids, Pangea, Architects Without Borders—say the group is unique for its pragmatism and deep community roots. Rev. Charles Ong'injo, who blessed the work from the start, is helping other congregations launch similar projects.

Kenya's AIDS rate has fallen since the 1990s, and far more people today are willing to go for testing and treatment. Still, about 14 percent of the district's 160,000 people are infected, double the national rate.

The Rabuor project is about a lot more than AIDS prevention: It's about people learning that they can better their own lives. Loyce, 52, bounds into a meeting and revs up the team, with the energy of the field hockey and track competitor she used to be.

Rosemell, 69, tall and sturdy, brings a quiet wisdom instead. She speaks in a girlish voice, and her laugh rumbles soft and low.

She began back in the 1990s, when AIDS was ripping the heart out of almost every family here. Yet people barely whispered about it because prostitutes and truckers were the early conduits of the disease.

Rosemell didn't talk about AIDS either, but she talked about the orphans it left behind. She recalls that the children were "very bad in their bodies" because they didn't have enough food.

She grew up without a father, helped raise her siblings, sometimes went without food herself. In 1998 she began giving the kids food from her own home. Then she turned to a women's group she had founded to see "what we can do for these children, now we are their mothers and fathers."

Worried about the orphans, Rosemell cut short a visit in 2001 to Loyce in Seattle. On her return, she asked Ong'injo if the women could use a room at the Rabuor church. She asked her husband, Wesley, a retired school headmaster, for money to hire a teacher. The women launched a nursery school.

When Loyce visited her childhood home months later, she saw how much had changed.

"I had a first-class community and village to bring me up. Everything a child could dream of, I had it," she says. "People rarely died. The first one I knew, I was 18."

But in Rabuor so many were dying that villagers spent much of their time and resources on funerals. Loyce, who once worked for the World Bank and the Gates Foundation, looked for a way to help.

She sent her salary. She asked people in her Seattle church to contribute. Then she and supporters founded Rabuor Village Project in 2003 as a nonprofit under U.S. law. The money trickling in helped buy land, build classrooms and hire teachers.

AIDS hit the Ong'udi family directly. Rosemell and Wesley—parents of 10, grandparents of 19—buried two of their children, in 2004 and 2007, AIDS victims who each left behind a healthy child. Another of their children is HIV-positive but taking AIDS drugs.

But people were not ready to discuss AIDS; their focus was on feeding their families.

The first step was to increase crops, starting with corn. Next came projects to earn income, keep children in school and train adults in agriculture, nutrition, vocational skills. Conditions still remain basic: no running water, no electrical service, no cars, but a few cell phones.

Loyce, who calls her mother the Mother Teresa and Martin Luther King Jr. of Rabuor, credits Rosemell's political savvy for finding patrons. Ong'injo says the church's backing shields the work from corrupt politicians. Rosemell's son Kennedy helps navigate bureaucracy and politics as assistant chief.

Rosemell is stepping back, because she doesn't want the work to be seen just as "Ong'udi's thing." The new "chair lady" of the 100-member Karateng Rabuor Women's Group is Yuanita Ong'udi (not a relative). Projects include sunflowers for cooking oil, goats whose milk feeds the children, a donated truck they rent out and, always, help for the poorest.

The nursery school serves two hot meals and a hearty snack every day to 160 students. The Rabuor project pays 25 salaries, including four teachers, four cooks, a nurse and two pharmacists - people who volunteered before there was money for salaries. Community health workers survey 10 villages.

The youth group was born out of a meeting between Loyce and 150 angry youths in 2005, who felt the Rabuor project wasn't helping them. The group now runs a beekeeping project, raises chickens and makes bricks. In a cultural breakthrough, young men and women teach school and adult groups about HIV prevention, AIDS testing and treatment, including condom use, abstinence, responsible sexuality and reduced mother-to-child transmission.

Dawnson Owuor, project manager, says the projects interconnect. For example, the youths rent land from the women's group for their brickwork; when the women's group builds a classroom, it buys bricks from the youths. The projects also help many of the 60 families who fled here during the violence after Kenya's disputed presidential elections in December.

In Seattle, Loyce is the only person the project pays; the team relies on volunteers, including Carol Kinney, a nutritionist who conducted a feeding survey in Rabuor. Treasurer David Anstine, another volunteer, says money sent to Kenya rose from about $39,000 in 2005 to $165,000 in 2007.

Loyce is driven and admits to driving others. Early on, she chided people for wallowing in misery, as if they were saying, "I love the face of poverty. Darling poverty, live with me forever."

But Loyce doesn't own land or live here, and she recognizes the project can only succeed if villagers are involved. Kigochi, the district commissioner, says too many anti-AIDS groups offer training in hotels, at high cost; the Rabuor group works in the villages and "everyone appreciates it."

Loyce's work comes on top of full-time studies to complete a master's degree in public administration, and she's raising a daughter alone. She says she's energized by "something in the children's faces." Collins Otieno is inspired by U.S. presidential contender Barack Obama, whose father came from this region. And Brenda Amoke, an orphan, greets her with news of high school success: "Mommy, I'm No. 1."

In May, Rabuor registered an organization called Village by Village to link existing groups and expand into other communities. In June, Loyce launched a project, with Rotary Clubs, to pump drinking water to the village and for a vocational training center to teach tailoring, metalwork and computer skills.

MOST

From Page 1

tors Certificate—a hiring requirement amended in 2006.

Four principals and one vice principal hold the certification, said Ramon Diaz, acting PSS Commissioner and acting Human Resources Director.

"As far as we know, all our records show that only five have certifications," he said.

The remaining permanent and acting principals are actively working toward obtaining the certification, Diaz said.

Principals who were in the school system before the requirement was amended were grandfathered in, Diaz said. Acting principals must show proof they are working toward the certificate.

"It's always a difficult situation when you change policy," Diaz said. "We have to be fair but ultimately hold them accountable."

PSS will continue to support the principals and vice principals in the system who do not currently have the certification, "so long as we're seeing good faith effort," Diaz said.

"We do not abandon them," he said. "We need them to stay focused on reaching our goals."

The timeframe for completion of the certification is different for each principal, he said. In some cases, principals might just be lacking one or two courses, Diaz said.

Ultimately, Diaz said, the academic certification requirement makes principals and vice principals better suited to run schools.

The four principals who attained the certification received it in the last year, he said. No principal in PSS held the certification before the amendment was passed.

Diaz said PSS is currently finalizing principal placements for the 2008-2009 school year.

According to the job vacancy announcement, level I, II, and III principals must hold a master's degree with a major in educational administration or related field; a minimum of six years experience; three years teaching and three years of successful experience as a school administrator or related leadership management field; and possess a valid CNMI Administrators Certificate. Candidates must also pass Praxis I and Praxis II Content Knowledge tests.

POWER

From Page 1

"From the technical point of view, the engines of Power Plant 1 have to be shutdown at the soonest," said the power plant official who requested not to be identified.

If the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. chooses to run the engines at risk, the official recommended a close monitoring on the crankcase pressure and act according to the recommendation of the engine manufacturer.

"They should also clean the surroundings of the engines of all combustible materials to prevent fire," the power plant official, who previously worked in many power plants in a number of countries, told *Saipan Tribune*.

He said in case of an explosion it can be powerful enough to blow off the metal doors of the engine crankcase.

Fitial has declared a state of disaster emergency for the CNMI, citing that one of the power engines at Power Plant 1 could explode at any time, maiming or killing power plant workers.

Fitial disclosed that one or more of the engines is so damaged by wear and lack of adequate maintenance for many years that it may experience a catastrophic failure.

"The condition of the engines is so bad that the technical experts at the plant cannot predict precisely the time of failure. But they do predict such a catastrophic failure," said the governor in the declaration he signed Aug. 1.

Asked for comment by the *Saipan Tribune* about the governor's warning, the power plant official stated that the chances of crankcase explosion increases as the power engine unit approach its overhauling schedule.

The official explained that there is always a chance of crankcase explosion in any diesel engine caused by blow byes resulting from sudden breakage of piston rings (unpredictable) or increase of clearance between piston and liner (predictable).

"The increase can even go exponential if the units are run at low load as the production of carbon which is hard and abrasive is very high due to incomplete combustion," he said.

The concerned official provided the following anatomy of the crankcase explosion:

■ The operating oil in the crankcase due to heat forms a mist. If the heat is within the operating range, the crankcase pressure will stabilize at a range recommended by the engine manufacturer.

■ When the heat is coupled by a blow bye or an overheated bearing, the pressure of the crankcase will also correspondingly increase which, if not corrected could cause the explosion doors to open to relieve the pressure.

■ However in doing so sometimes surrounding air (oxygen) can come into the crankcase resulting to fire and explosion.

■ The blue flame from this explosion can have a temperature of over 1,500 degrees Celsius, which is enough to cause second or third degree burns.

■ If there are combustible materials on the path of the flame, these will also burn spontaneously.

BENEDETTO

From Page 1

The federal ombudsman disclosed that he accepted an offer of employment "elsewhere in the federal system."

Benedetto, however, is mum on his new assignment.

"Unfortunately, until certain administrative details have been worked out, I must decline further comment," he said.

Benedetto has held the post since October 2002. In November 2007, the federal government extended his contract for another three years.

Benedetto said he considers an honor to have worked for the Office of Insular Affairs as the second Ombudsman.

"I have learned a lot from my colleagues in Interior, from those within the local government with whom I have worked so closely, and from the many, many workers who have shared their experiences with me over the years. We have all accomplished a lot together," he said.

The ombudsman's office provides assistance to the 30,000 plus alien workers with labor and immigration complaints. Benedetto's leadership has earned respect and confidence from many nonresident workers.

However, Benedetto has also gained some critics, including Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, who in 2007, wrote to U.S. Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne not to reappoint the ombudsman. The governor said Benedetto is unfit for the job and must be removed from office.

The controversial Taotao Tano president, Greg Cruz, protested the ombudsman's efforts that led to the disclosure that hundreds of guest workers have $6.1 million in unpaid Labor judgments that remain uncollected. Cruz also criticized him for participating in the December 2007 Unity March.

Benedetto also figured in a public debate with then Rep. Cinta Kaipat, who is now a Labor deputy secretary, over the administration-backed labor reform law, which is now a law.

The federal ombudsman said he is hoping that people will eventually understand that if he was critical at times, it was because he cares about the CNMI and its people.

"This is my home. And because I think working people—resident and nonresident alike—should get a better deal," Benedetto pointed out.

Benedetto has been involved in meetings with various federal agencies on their plans to implement to the CNMI Public Law 110-229, the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008 (the law to extend the Immigration and Nationality Act).

CUC load shedding schedule out

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. would like to inform the public that as the rehabilitation and maintenance repairs continue on the engines and generators at the Power Plant1, load shedding will continue to be required. However, to conform to the daily power demand, the schedule will be expanded to include the entire feeder (1st & 2nd partial) in each of the respective timeslots other than Feeder 1. Therefore, the load shedding schedule for Aug. 16 through Aug. 22, 2008 will be as follows.

8am -10am Feeder-2: Entire Grid

Beach Road Garapan at Fishing Base Kristo Rai south to San Jose Intersection

10am - 12pm Kiya 1: Kiya-2: Entire Grid

As Lito, Portions of Fina Sisu, Koblerville, As Gonno, San Antonio and Afetnas, portions of Chalan Kanoa, Chalan Piao

Feeder-3: Laterals

Upper Gualo Rai

12pm -2pm Feeder-4: Entire Grid

Lower Base, Sadog Tasi, Capital Hill, Kagman and portions of Papago to Botanical Garden

2pm - 4pm Feeder-1: Second partial

99 Cents Store and portions of Garapan (DFS and BOG), Upper and Navy Hill Lower Chinatown, Kristo Rai Church

Feeder-3: Laterals

Upper and Navy Hill Lower Chinatown, Kristo Rai Church Taro Sue to portions of China Town

4pm - 6pm Feeder-7: Entire Grid

Lower Base industrial area, north to Tanapag, Achugao, San Roque, As Matuis and Marpi.

6pm - 8pm Kiya 1: Entire Grid

As Terlaje, NMC, Botanical Garden, Portions of Fina Sisu, Lower Dandan, Upper Dandan, Homestead, Isley Field, Kannat Tabla

8pm - 10pm Kiya-4: Entire Grid

Portions of Chalan Kiya, San Jose, Oleai, Susupe, Mount Carmel and south to portions of Chalan Kanoa

Water and wastewater services will also be affected in the respective areas as a result of the power outages. CUC will make all efforts to keep to this schedule but it may be modified in future public notices. The schedule may also be altered to address particular emergencies when necessary.

Source: Commonwealth Utilities Corp.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Meet candidate Davis

Interested persons are invited to meet with John H. Davis Jr., candidate for the position of Delegate to the U.S. Congress, and express their views and perspective on the election at community meetings to be held as follows:

- Tuesday, Aug. 19, 5pm-6-pm - San Antonio Youth Center
- Wednesday, Aug. 20, 5pm - 6pm - Kobler Youth Center
- Monday, Aug. 25, 5pm - 6pm Tanapag Youth Center
- Tuesday, Aug. 26, 5pm - 6pm Gualo Rai Youth Center

NMC registration starts today

Northern Marianas College registration for the Fall 2008 semester begins today, Monday through Friday, from 9am to 6pm. Late registration will be on Saturday, Aug. 23, from 9am to 12pm.

Those who have not applied for admission can submit their application as late as Aug. 23, 2008, provided that they have taken the English and math placement tests already.

For more information about registration, class schedules, and placement test schedules, visit the college's website at www.nmcnet.edu. ***(NMC)***

Tinian Jr. Sr. High School announcements

Monday, Aug. 18, 2008 – 9am

Orientation for Students and Parents of 7th and 8th Graders

Venue: Cafeteria – Tinian Jr. Sr. High School

Message of Appreciation

We would like to take this opportunity to extend our sincere and deepest appreciation to the following businesses and individuals who have contributed in one way or another to our fundraising efforts for the

2nd Annual Saipan/Guam Youth Goodwill Baseball Tournament,

which took place on July 19 & 20, 2008 in Guam. Without your generous support and assistance, our trip to represent our island would not have been a success.

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Rep. Raymond D. Palacios
Rep. Rosemond B. Santos
Rozal Zest Enterprise
Saipan Ice Incorporated
Saipan Shipping Company
Saipan Stevedore Company
Star Water

We would also like to thank the members of the community who helped by purchasing raffle tickets, donating during our roadside coin drives, participating in our softball tournament and purchasing lunches. We are touched by your unselfishness in spite of financial difficulties. Lastly, we would like to thank the Parents of our Players for their support and assistance and for sacrificing their time away from home to help in all the fundraising events. Thank you very much!

From:
Eliseo "Chel" M. Castro-Manager
Mel Sakisat, Bob Lizama, Ton Camacho, Ed Sablan-Coaches
Ruth Ann P. Sakisat-Secretary
TJ Litulumar-Treasurer

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DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING
Second Floor Afetña Square Building, San Antonio, P.O. Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone no. (670) 236-0956/0957 Facsimile no. (670) 236-0995

NOTICE OF HEARINGS PENDING DENIAL APPEALS

FOR AUGUST 21, 22, 28, 29, 2008 & SEPTEMBER 04, & 05, 2008

Notice is hereby given to the persons listed below to appear at the Hearing Office, Department of Labor, Second Floor, Afetña Square Building, San Antonio, on the date and at the time listed below. Please bring any documentation necessary to resolve the issues that led to the denial of your permit application. If you fail to appear or fail to bring required documentation, the appeal may be dismissed and an administrative order may be entered against you. Any employee who intends to request permission to transfer to a new employer must appear at the hearing to make that request; failure to appear may result in immediate denial of transfer relief.

Case No.	Employee	Employer	Hearing Date	Time
DC 08-496	Concepcion, Andrea M.	3-H Corporation	September 4, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-175	Kapau-An Jr., Lorenzo G.	4JC Corporation	August 28, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-701	Arsenal, Maria Luisa Dls.	Advance Group LLC	August 29, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-583	Guirit, Estrella L.	Aldan, Redie	September 4, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-723	Akimaru, Hiroki	Aqua Soul Saipan Inc.	August 28, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-639	Fajardo, Florisa P.	Atalig, Felipe Q.	August 21, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-683	Galla, Alfredo G.	Azucenas, Renato G.	August 21, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-476	Bao, Xiao Ming	Blue Sky Corporation	August 28, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-638	Sundiam, Pee Jay L.	Boo II Corporation	September 4, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-675	Santos, Ruben, Jr. C.	Calvo, Edward M.	August 21, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-566	Noble, Joefry F.	Calvo, Julian S.	August 28, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-618	Reyes, Arlina R.	Calvo, Julian S.	August 28, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-680	Lebrias, Emilio A.	Camacho, Antonio S.	August 21, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-595	Pangilanan, Federico II P.	Castro, Alexander	September 5, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-543	Li, Xiuyuan	Castro, Augustin T.	August 22, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-691	Nishikawa, Koji	Cordy & Company Limited	August 21, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-690	Ocson, Ivony B.	Cordy & Company Limited	August 21, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-589	Calage, Crisita S.	Crystal Seas - CNMI, Inc.	September 4, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-588	Abella, Juanita M.	Crystal Seas CNMI Inc.	September 4, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-519	Zhang, Yong	Cui Rong Corporation	August 29, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-465	Dizon, Leonora M.	D L Corporation	August 28, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-560	Luo, Xiaomin	Dai Development Corporation	August 29, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-490	Estrada, Veronica H.	Ebilane Corporation	August 29, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-627	Acero, Jesus R.	ECM International Corporation	September 4, 2008	1:00 p.m
DC 08-551	Martinez, Vhilma S.	Elidchedong, James R.	August 29, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-544	Wang, Hui Ying	Everbright Company Ltd.	August 29, 2008	1:00 p.m
DC 08-545	Xu, Xinbao	Everbright Company Ltd.	August 29, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-665	Cui, Linhua	Future World Inc.	August 22, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-581	Novillas, Ernesto Jr. L.	Graphics Inc.	August 28, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-663	Racsa, Rusalein A.	Hart, William	August 28, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-887	Palabay, Andrew A.	Hotel Nikko Saipan	September 5, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-724	Fama, Noel T.	Hotel Nikko Spn. Inc.	September 5, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-640	Zhang, Aimei	Huana Bowen USA Inc.	September 4, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-641	Wang, Meng	Huang Zeng Corporation, Ltd.	August 22, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-642	Yi, Guanghua	Huang Zeng Corporation, Ltd.	August 22, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-177	Lao, Qiongxiao	Hui Huang Saipan, Inc.	August 22, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-700	Thomas, Mali Muakerd	Inter Pacific Resort Corporation	September 5, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-246	Gementiza, Emilio R.	L & R Investment Corporation	August 28, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-679	Paras, Virginia A.	Lee Sung Chun	August 21, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-226B	Zhang, Chunli	Liberty Corporation	August 28, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-754	Buenicho, Jenelyn T.	Lisua, Alexcia D.	August 21, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-798	Mecate, Merlinda M.	Lisua, Ramon & Alexcia	August 22, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-599	Par, Azucena G.	Litulumar, Estaneslao	September 5, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-540	Huang, Xuanren	Luo's Corporation	August 29, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-520	Zhao, Yuanrong	Man Bao Corporation	August 29, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-537	Hernandez, Bonifacio	Marianas Environment & Dev. Inc.	September 4, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-517	Crisostomo, Pepe R.	Marianas Security Corporation	August 22, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-655	Xu, Guoquan	Micro. Holding Co., LLC	August 21, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-592	Ladaban, Eugenia F.	Micronesia Woodcraft Ent. Inc.	September 5, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-694	Dioneda, Teresita D.	Micronesia Woodcraft Ent., Inc.	August 21, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-693	Tenorio, Dexter G.	Micronesia Woodcraft Ent., Inc.	August 21, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-552	Agno, Rogelio B.	Misamis Construction Spn. Ltd.	August 29, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-692	Pabale, Rodofo B.	Misamis Construction Spn. Ltd.	August 21, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-697	DLC Cordero, Geraldine C.	Noah Corporation	August 21, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-698	Satira, Marjerie R.	Noah Saipan Inc.	August 21, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-688	Francisco, Elenita G.	Pacific Creative Network	August 21, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-628	Prado, Macario Jr. B.	Pacific Quality Builders	September 4, 2008	1:00 p.m
DC 08-623	Wang, Xingjuan	Peace Asia Pacific Corporation	September 5, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-513	Oh, Joon Hwan	Provenance Incorporated	August 28, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-598	Han, Hong Zhen	Q J Company Ltd.	September 5, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-420	Wu, Li-Hua	Qing Lang Corporation	August 22, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-501	Castillo, Carmelita B.	R & S Enterprises, Inc.	September 4, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-500	Tarriela, Lorna G.	R & S Enterprises, Inc.	September 4, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-167	Yan, Chengyi	Rigel Corporation	September 4, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-591	Jiang, Changcheng	Royal Supplies Inc.	September 5, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-656	Caintoy, Raquel U.	Sablan, Deverly Davina M.	August 22, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-654	Jing, Yan Li	Sablan, Vicenta M.	August 22, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-643	Ling, Min	SDM Enterprises, Inc.	August 22, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-487	Medino, Connie V.	Se Young Corporation	August 29, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-463	Dabu, Liezle B.	Seman, Enrique K.	August 28, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-464	Ma, Fengying	Seman, Enrique K.	August 28, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-462	Shan, Rongmei	Seman, Enrique K.	August 28, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-664	Sun, Shuqing	SMZ Corporation	August 22, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-582	Carandang, Angeles M.	South Pac Galaxy Corporation	September 4, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-702	Kim, Kyoungmyoung	St. Marks Inc.	September 4, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-610	Chan, Juanito M.	Star Corporation	September 5, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-555	Sun, Chunxiang	Sun Wen Corporation	August 29, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-676	Du, Chuanhua	Sunleader Co. Ltd.	August 21, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-677	Li, Xiulan	Sunleader Co. Ltd.	August 21, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-637	Llanes, Veronica L.	Vienna Corporation	September 4, 2008	2:00 p.m
DC 08-612	Navarro, Jehazel D. S.	Whitenack, Elena C.	September 5, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-622	Kim, Soon Hwa	Woong & Rok Inc.	September 5, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-539	Caguiat, Anicia V.	Y.K. Corporation	August 29, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-594	Zheng, Guozhen	Y.Z.L. Corporation	September 5, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-661	Magcalas, Alberto G.	Yuman Construction	August 22, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-660	Macaspac, Noviminda P.	Yumul, Elena M.	August 22, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-657	Li, Na	Yun Feng Corporation	August 22, 2008	1:00 p.m.

Saipan Southern High School to get wind energy

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
stefan_sebastian@saipantribune.com
BUSINESS EDITOR

Wind turbines will soon be spinning in the skies over Saipan Southern High School as environmental consultants are preparing to install two separate wind energy systems capable of powering two of the school's classrooms.

The installation of the wind energy systems stems from a settlement the Environmental Protection Agency and the now closed Concorde Garment Manufacturing company, cited by the EPA in 2005 for violations of hazardous waste laws.

"This came from a negative beginning and has turned into a very positive finish," said Thomas Polevich of Allied Pacific Environmental Consulting.

Under the EPA's supplemental environmental programs (SEP) initiative, Polevich said, Concorde can spend 80 percent of the $70,000 settlement—a figure negotiated down from the more than $220,000 fine EPA levied against the company—for a project that has public environmental benefits like the wind energy systems.

The project, according to APEC consultant Robert Jordan, calls for the installation of two types of wind energy systems; a sleek windmill design known as the Skystream and a smaller system called the vertical axis wind turbine—a brand that looks somewhat like an overgrown anemometer.

A key aspect of the Skystream system, he said, is its so-called "net metering" capability, which allows it to "run the meter backwards," meaning it can turn back the school's electrical meter to save money. The Skystream, he added, could save the school up to $198 each month in electrical costs and serve as a "catalyst for an alternative energy curriculum."

Rep. Palacios wonders why Susupe Beach Park renovation project not being pursued

Rep. Raymond D. Palacios has inquired with the Division of Parks and Recreation as to why the renovation project at the Susupe Beach Park has not been pursued.

Palacios

Palacios reminded Parks and Recreation director Antonio T. Benavente that three months ago, the director stated that he was still waiting for the renovation project design from the Department of Public Works in order to proceed.

In his letter last week to Benavente, Palacios pointed out that his follow up with the project, DPW Secretary Diego B. Songsong informed him that since almost all pavilions have one distinctive design, one at Susupe Beach Park is probably not needed.

"Should this be the case, could you please update me as to when the renovation will commence so that we can restore its beauty back and at the same time, address the safety issues the structures posed because of its dilapidated condition," the lawmaker told Benavente.

On the issue of dilapidated roads, Palacios and Rep. Oscar M. Babauta asked Songsong to have DPW conduct physical survey of the secondary roads in Chalan Kanoa and Susupe.

The two lawmakers said their constituents continuously launched complaints against their office to effectuate repairs of pot holes arising out of approved paved roads, digging for water, sewer, and other projects.

"Occasionally, we'd tried our best doing these repairs utilizing our employees. Since our office is not in the position to mitigate these problems, hence, we solicit your office's expertise," Palacios and Babauta told the DPW secretary. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

PUBLIC NOTICE

APPLICATION FOR CNMI WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION

The Antidegradation Policy of the Water Quality Standards of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands states that the protection and maintenance of the quality of the waters of the Commonwealth are an historic and legal right of the people of the Northern Mariana Islands, and that this shall be the public policy of the Commonwealth. Any proposed activity that will impact the waters of the Commonwealth must receive a Water Quality Certification from the Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ). In issuing a Water Quality Certification, DEQ must assure that the proposed activity complies with all applicable provisions of the CNMI Water Quality Standards and federal Clean Water Act, will not interfere with the attainment or maintenance of the existing or designated uses of the Commonwealth waters, and that all appropriate and practicable steps have been taken to minimize potential adverse impacts to aquatic life and human health.

Upon receiving an application, DEQ issues a public notification which describes the proposed activity and potential impacts on water quality, aquatic life and human health. A thirty (30) day public comment period will commence from the date of the first publication of the notice.

The Director of DEQ may conduct a public hearing to solicit comments on the application if a hearing is requested by the public. DEQ will make a determination for issuing a Water Quality Certification based upon a complete technical review of the application and the public comments received.

DEQ is soliciting comments on the following application for a CNMI Water Quality Certification.

1. **APPLICANT**: National Park Service (NPS), American Memorial Park, P.O. Box 5198 CHRB, Saipan, MP 96950

2. **APPLICABLE STATUTORY AUTHORITY**: CNMI Commonwealth Environmental Protection Act (Public Law No. 3-23); CNMI Water Quality Standards, Parts 3 and 10 (Commonwealth Register Vol. 26 No. 09, September 24, 2004).

3. **LOCATION OF PROPOSED ACTIVITY**: American Memorial Park, located in Smiling Cove Marina, village of Garapan, Saipan.

4. **DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTIVITY**: The project consists of the following components: installation of approximately 1000 linear feet of sheet pile along harbor shoreline, construction of rock rip-rap slope protection structure, site improvements including erosion control measures, removal of debris, and installation of navigational aid devices. Approximately 338 cubic yards of excavated material, and construction of the various improvements will result in the placement of approximately 1,600 cubic yards of gravel fill.

5. **IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED ACTION**: Rehabilitation work will kill non-mobile or slow moving organisms. There is limited coral growth in the proposed cut/fill areas; however, coral growth increases along certain areas on the seaward edge of the adjacent fringing reefs which may be temporarily impacted by sediment plumes generated by construction activities.

6. **PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES**: Silt curtains will be utilized as needed to minimize the spread of the sediment plume onto the nearby live coral colonies. The applicant will monitor water quality as required to ensure proper operation of the silt curtains. Dredge material will be reused as fill for the adjacent parking lot and rehabilitation of the concrete pier. Dredge material not utilized on-site will be disposed at the municipal dump or other approved site. Site improvements will alleviate existing erosion and sedimentation problems. The applicant will work with DEQ during the project to identify any other reasonable mitigative measures that may become necessary.

Written comments and inquires should be submitted to DEQ within thirty (30) days of the first date of publication of this notice. Please mail comments to Director, Division of Environmental Quality, P.O. Box 501304, Saipan, MP 96950

Floor Leader seeks regulation of public cemeteries

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

House Floor Leader Joseph N. Camacho has introduced legislation that seeks to regulate public cemeteries in the CNMI.

Under Camacho's House Bill 16-141, the mayors of Saipan, Rota, Tinian, and the Northern Islands shall be in-charge of administering and managing public cemeteries within their respective municipalities.

The legislation also gives the mayors authority to charge not exceed to $250 in application requirements, approval, issuance and fee for burial permits.

However, the fee may be waived for indigent families as well as unclaimed bodies.

"Having the mayor's office in charge makes sure that public cemeteries are kept clean, well groomed, and the people know where to go in the unfortunate event a family member passes away," Camacho told *Saipan Tribune* in an e-mail.

Camacho pointed out that all existing burial plots, headstones, and markers prior to the enactment of the bill shall be grandfathered.

"I know that burial plots with the headstones and markers have started to grow out of control and it needs to be regulated," he said.

The Floor Leader stressed that if his bill is signed into law, it will only affect future burial plots.

Camacho

"Out of respect to the souls of the departed and the families we will not touch those burial plots that exist prior to this bill," he said.

Citing the scarcity of land for public cemeteries, Camacho underscored the need to regulate the size, length, and wide of future burial plots.

"Because land space is limited we have to make better use of it and one way is to regulate the location, size, length, wide of burial plots," the lawmaker said.

Camacho said the only current statute pertaining to public cemeteries provides for the administration of the Marpi Public Cemetery.

The bill mandated the mayors to keep record of burial plot locations, names, dates, and other identifying information.

Delayed payments to daycare providers resolved

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Daycare Providers Association as well as the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs are relieved that the delay in the issuance of checks and other issues that they have faced previously has finally been resolved.

DCCA's Child Care Program director Maribel S.D. Loste said they have already addressed the providers' concerns quite successfully after a meeting earlier this week.

It was two months ago that the daycare association complained about payment delays.

The previous procedure was that the Attorney General's Office had to sign off on payments exceeding $10,000, but that changed when the Department of Finance, DCCA, and AGO decided to forgo that system.

In a statement from Masina Leuta addressed to members of the daycare association, she advised them about the positive result of a meeting last Aug. 12 with DCCA Secretary Melvin Faisao and Loste.

Leuta noted that after addressing the disappointment of the association and the many related questions to the subject of delayed payments and unequal "disbursement treatment" to the daycare centers in regards to issuance of checks, the DCCA secretary, she said told the association that he will ask assistance from the Finance Secretary for immediate an meeting and see how they can put an end to the problem.

"We are all very stressed and are very tired of this situation, but let us not give up hope. Together we should stand to protect and to serve our belief which is "when a service has already been done and given, we have the right to collect our cost," Leuta advised the daycare providers.

She said that the government cannot continue to demand taxes, utility, and other fees while their payments are being delayed, especially because these are federal granted programs.

"We should seek for a steady and a set schedule for payments pick up, instead of these unorganized and handicap schedules," Leuta said.

Another issue discussed in that same meeting included the Fair Payment Act.

Accordingly, all daycare centers are to be advised that the program will equally pay them the same amount as the private parent does.

For instance, if you charge your private parents $150 per month, the CCF Childcare program will also pay the center $150 for the CCF children in your center.

Leuta also advised their members that the Childcare Program is now able to provide full payments for the children in each center with ages 0 to 5, which was announced during the meeting.

Also starting in November, all billings must be submitted with the receipt of the GO payment made to each center by the CCF parents otherwise they will not be able to collect their CCF payment.

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The 8th Annual Pacific Region Investment Conference
OCTOBER 9 - 10, 2008 MANILA, PHILIPPINES
www.apafs.org • admin@apafs.org

About the Conference

The Asia Pacific Association for Fiduciary Studies (APAFS) will hold its **8th Annual Pacific Region Investment Conference in Manila, Philippines on October 9-10, 2008 at the Grand Ballroom of the Renaissance Makati City Hotel.**

The Annual Investment Conference boasts of world-renowned experts and global leaders as lecturers and moderators. This year's keynote speaker is legendary contrarian investor **Dr. Marc Faber**, Editor and Publisher of "The Gloom, Boom & Doom Report" (www.gloomboomdoom.com), a monthly newsletter on unusual investment opportunities. He is known for his alternative views and lifestyle, and believes that when one '...follow(s) the course opposite to custom, you will almost always be right.' A regular contributor to leading financial publications around the world, Dr. Faber is also the author of "TOMORROW'S GOLD - Asia's Age of Discovery", which enjoyed several weeks on Amazon's bestseller list and has been translated to five different languages. Aside from being associated with a variety of funds and serving in the Board of Directors of numerous companies, he is also the CEO and President of Marc Faber Limited.

Also among the conference's notable speakers is the Philippines' **Senator Edgardo Angara**, author of PERA Law and Philippine Pension Reform. Likewise making an appearance are **Connie Mullis**, Vice President of ProfitSharing/401k Council of America; **Geri Marullo**, President & CEO of Consuelo Foundation; **Margaret Ang**, CFA of Janus Capital Asia Ltd.; **Simon Rudolph**, ACA of Franklin Templeton Investments; and **Frank W. Crawford**, President of Crawford & Associates, PC among others.
APAFS is a non-profit organization affiliated with a group of sponsors who generously lend their support and valuable inputs not only to the institution but also to the conference. **Gerard Cruz**, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Association, shares his enthusiasm with all the top-level speakers who will be making time for the Conference, "We are delighted that the Association can offer speakers of such caliber and variety from around the world at this year's conference."

Daniel A. Roland, Executive Director of APAFS, says that membership of the Association in the Philippines has remarkably grown since the Conference is now on its third year in the country. He also foresees more than 300 delegates to attend the conference. Moreover, Roland shares, *"This year, the Association is seeing an increase in attendance with the additional interest coming from Pacific Forum member countries around the Pacific, as well as the usual strong support from the United States, Micronesia and other traditional regions."*

The two-day conference will address the present international trends in the industry as well as discuss fiduciary practices and implementations that are more suitable to the Asia Pacific region. On its third year in the Philippines, the Conference has attracted over 300 fiduciary experts and practitioners from all across the globe.

Well-known financial companies in the Asia Pacific Region that include Citi Smith Barney Consulting Group, Franklin Templeton Institutional, Janus Capital Asia Ltd., and Atlanta Sosnoff Capital Management will be the sponsors of the event.

Continental Micronesia is the official airline carrier for the conference.

For more information about APAFS and the 8th Annual Pacific Region Investment Conference sign-up details, you may directly access their website at www.apafs. org or contact their administrator at admin@apafs.org.

Registration Information

☐ *Yes!* Please register me for the **8th Annual Pacific Region Investment Conference**

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☐ Team Registration Fee (For 2 or more participants) ____ **Number of participants at $100 USD/person**

Total Fees: $_____

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For more information and complete sponsorship details, please log on to **www.apafs.org**

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Summer Jam bands to perform Aug. 24

By JACQUELINE DELA CRUZ
jackie_delacruz89@yahoo.com
JUNIOR REPORTER

Ten bands will join *Beach Road Magazine*'s "Saipan Summer Jam" on Aug. 24 at Saipan Grand Hotel's Club V.

"It's definitely going to be a night of different varieties of music," said *Beach Road Magazine*'s account manager Susan Marchitti.

"With about a month of planning for the event, the 10 slots were filled up so fast. I received a lot of phone calls from bands that are interested to join," she added.

Entrance fee will be $5 with one free non-alcohol drink with no age limit. "Adults that want to drink alcohol will receive a wrist band as a mark to show bartenders that they are allowed to drink, said Marchitti.

The judges will be musicians and they will decide on who the Top 3 winners will be.

The judging criteria will be based on showmanship (25 percent), originality (25 percent), audience impact on text votes (20 percent), and overall performance (30 percent).

Winners will get a chance to perform at Palms Resort Saipan's "Back-to-School Summer Bash" on Aug. 30.

"This is the first time that we are going to have an event like this, and it's really suppose to be fun for every one and it have affordable prizes," said Marchitti.

Additional prizes will be announced in a later date.

Band groups are required to bring their own instruments to the event and stagehands will be available to help with the setup of instruments.

Each band has at least two members and will give a 20-minute performance.

The final band performance are Project X, The Frozen Nipple Band, Rated R, Fritada, Past & Present, J2, D is for Dangerous, The high pitch band, The Channel band, and The Burning Bush Band.

As of Aug, 7, currently leading with the most votes of 21 is The High Pitch band.

To text vote, input the name of your favorite band and their four-digit number and then send it. PTI will charge 10 cents per vote. Voting will end on Aug. 24, 2008 at 8pm.

You can also visit www.pticom.com/txtvoteresult to view which bands are on top.

The event is organized by *Beach Road* magazine and sponsored by Coca Cola, Northern Marianas College, PTI, and Budget Car Rental.

For inquiries, call Marchitti at 483-3145 or Jojo Dass at 483-3147.

NOT GUILTY CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Judge Kenneth Govendo declared James Timothy Reid not guilty of all counts on Friday, Aug. 15. Picture above shows, from left, Reid, intern Nicole M. Torres, and Chief Public Defender Adam Hardwicke.

Shelly K. Kapileo
P.O. Box 501204
Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone No.: 288-7727

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of the Petition for the Change of Name of: SHELLY KUMAICHI KAPILEO, Petitioner	)	FCD CN CIVIL ACTION NO. 08-0488 **NOTICE OF HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on September 8, 2008, at 1:30 p.m. in Courtroom 205, before the Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo.

Dated this 14th day of August, 2008.

Bernadita A. Sablan
Clerk of Court

/s/ By: Deputy Clerk of Court

Thomas I. Saures and Rita L. Saures
P.O. Box 501697
Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone No. 235-1266

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN RE THE MATTER OF THE PETITION TO APPOINT GENERAL GUARDIANSHIP FOR: **KAISHA MARIA WARAKAI** Minor Child by THOMAS I. SAURES and RITA L. SAURES Petitioners.	)	FCD GU CIVIL ACTION NO. 08-0442 NOTICE OF HEARING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition to Appoint a Legal Guardian for the above-named minor child by Thomas I. Saures and Rita L. Saures Petitioners, was filed with the above-entitled Honorable Court and is open for review at the office of the Clerk of the said Court in Susupe, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

A HEARING of said petition for Guardianship will held at the above-entitled Honorable Court at Guma Hustisia Building, Susupe, Saipan, NMI, before the Honorable Kenneth Govendo on the 15th day of September, 2008 at 1:30 p.m. or as soon as thereafter.

Bernadita A. Sablan
Clerk of Court

/s/ By: Deputy Clerk of Court

Procurement And Supply
CNMI Government

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP NO.: RFP08-OPA-089
Submission Date: September 11, 2008 • Time: 4:00 p.m.
"TO PERFORM A SINGLE AUDIT OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT FOR THE FISCAL YEARS ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2008, 2009 AND 2010"

Copies of the RFP package may be obtained from the office of the Director of Procurement and supply office in lowerbase during regular working hours. Inquiries may be directed to Rosauro C. Zapanta, Audit Manager, at the OPA (670) 322-6481/6482 or by fax at (670) 322-7812.

Preference is available to US Citizens or Permanent Residents as per Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118 and must be submitted with the proposal if preference is claimed.

/s/ MICHAEL PAI
Acting, Public Auditor

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director, P&S

Job Opportunity

Joeten Motors
POWERED BY YOU

CASHIER

- Will handle cash/charge transactions for Joeten Motor Company.
- Must be proficient in basic accounting & computerize cashiering with the ADP System, TAMS System and credit card machine.
- Some cashiering experience will be helpful but will train.
- Salary will commensurate with experience.

NAPA AUTO PARTS COUNTER - SALES PERSON

- Must have at least 2yrs. experience in the Auto Parts Business.
- Be able to read and understand Online Parts Catalogs but will train.
- Must be proficient in basic math & some knowledge in basic computer skills (MS Word/Excel spreadsheet).
- Good communication skills.
- Willing, able and ready to work.
- Salary will commensurate with experience.

Interested applicants should pick up an Application Form from Risha at Joeten Motor Company, Inc the main office. No phone calls, please. Serious Inquires Only!

Joeten Motor Company, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer and a drug-free workplace.

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

August 18, 1999

NMIRF assets up $62M in 8 months

The Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund registered a profit of $62 million during the first eight months of FY 1999 from its overseas investments, or a 22 percent increase compared to the same period of the previous fiscal year. Considered the highest earnings in recent years, this brings to $344.5 million the total investment portfolio of NMIRF as of June 30, 1999, according to acting Director Fred Camacho.

Report: Stayman's involved in on-job politics, too

Investigators for the House Resources Committee have dug up more evidence which strongly indicated that former Office of Insular Affairs Director Allen Stayman has engaged in illegal political activities to pursue Washington's federal takeover of the Northern Marianas, according to a news report. The US-based Roll Call Newspaper reported in its Monday issue that Styaman had wrote a memo to Matt Angle, former executive director of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC), suggesting that Democrats "repudiate" Froilan C. Tenorio, who was then governor of the CNMI.

US Sen. Harkin arrives today

U.S. Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) is arriving on Saipan this morning for a 12-hour visit, according to Jeff Schorr, field representative of the Office of Insular Affairs. Harkin, who is arriving from Guam, is scheduled to meet with Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio, as well as with federal and local officials, Schorr said. He will briefly visit the American Memorial Park at 5:30 p.m.

August 18, 2000

Hike car registration fee

An increase in vehicle registration fee by as much as double than the current rate is likely to occur if a legislative proposal draws support from the Senate and the governor. The House of Representatives cleared yesterday HB 12-54 updating CNMI's vehicle registration laws, which includes provisions setting out higher fees for the annual requirement.

House moves to strengthen free public education

A proposal to make free public education mandatory for children between the ages of five and 18 years old was set into motion yesterday under legislation aimed at strengthening the roles of the Public School System and the Board of Education. The House of Representatives passed during its session HB 12-158 that seeks to amend the education act enacted almost 12 years ago in an effort to enhance CNMI's educational policies, with provisions refining the duties and responsibilities of PSS and BOE.

Senate wants comprehensive scholarship bill

The Senate will draw up comprehensive legislation that sets out the government policy on financial aid and grants to students seeking higher education in an effort to maximize dwindling local resources. Five bills on scholarship, grants and educational assistance programs of the government, including four from Senate President Paul A. Manglona, are pending before the Committee on Health, Education and Welfare. They were tackled yesterday at a public hearing.

August 18, 2002

Suicide Cliff A living reminder of war's horror

The blue shade of the sky gradually becomes stronger as it meets the dark blue hue of seemingly unending seas when viewed from atop the Suicide Cliff. At 800 feet above sea level, the site provides one with a scenic view of the cliff and birds flying in mid-air by peeking by the fence line-and the greenery of the land below. Isolated by a zigzag road from Marpi, the Suicide Cliff offers not just the beautiful site but the tranquility away from the busy downtown.

Beauty queen visits Saipan

Daisy Reyes, 1996 Miss Philippines-World, temporarily escaped the stress of a cosmopolitan life in Manila for a refreshing vacation on Saipan, where she spent a few days exploring the island's splendid tour and historical sites with Filipino friends. Reyes, who was crowned Miss Personality in the 1996 Miss World Pageant held in India, was billeted at the Dai-Ichi Hotel Saipan Beach where she was greeted with the hotel personnel's warmth and hospitality.

AP

Armed law enforcement officers hop the fence surrounding Iolani Palace in order to gain access to the palace grounds, Friday, Aug. 15, 2008 in Honolulu.. State law officers arrested about 20 people after the second takeover this year of the Iolani Palace grounds by Native Hawaiians claiming to be the legitimate rulers of the Hawaiian Islands.

Hawaiian palace occupied anew; about 20 arrested

HONOLULU (AP)—A group of Native Hawaiians claiming to be the state's legitimate rulers occupied the grounds of a historic palace for two hours before being arrested by state officers in the second recent takeover of its kind.

A staff member of the Iolani Palace said she was assaulted and slightly injured during the takeover Friday night, then snubbed by city police who claimed they didn't have jurisdiction. Gov. Linda Lingle said Saturday that there would be an investigation into the police response to the takeover.

A group of men, wearing red shirts with "security" stenciled in yellow on the back, took over the grounds by chaining the gates of the palace next to the State Capitol and posted signs saying: "Property of the Kingdom of Hawaiian Trust."

Kippen de Alba Chu, executive director of the Friends of Iolani Palace, said he and other staff members were locked down in the palace and a nearby administration building during the takeover.

"They've got a king, and the king wants to sit on the throne," de Alba Chu said.

State law officers climbed over the fence a couple of hours after the takeover began and made about 20 arrests. The palace, normally open to tours, will remain closed during the weekend to assess any damage and to ensure its security, police said.

Ah Yuen, an Iolani Palace employee, said she was assaulted by protesters and called for help from a Honolulu police officer, who told her the palace grounds were not under city police jurisdiction.

Witnesses said the confrontation started when Yuen went to the palace gate and talked with the protesters, who locked the gate with a chain and then forced their way into the palace itself before officers from the state Department of Land and Natural Resources came to arrest them.

The governor promised an investigation and said the people who invaded the palace "have to be shown it's not going to be acceptable."

"This is one of the most cherished sites in our state," Lingle said. "We always have to try to strike a balance between public access and security for the building and for the people there."

Laura H. Thielen, director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources, which oversees the palace, condemned the takeover.

"We intend to charge them to the fullest extent of the law," Thielen said.

The pro-sovereignty group identified its leader as King Akahi Nui, who was among those arrested. An "occupation public information bulletin" distributed by a member of the group began: "Majesty Akahi Nui, the King of Hawaii, has now reoccupied the throne of Hawaii. The Kingdom of Hawaii is now re-enacted."

Akahi Nui claims to have been coronated in 1998.

The takeover of the palace—built in 1882 when the islands were ruled by a monarchy—came on Admission Day, a state holiday marking Hawaii's admission to the United States on Aug. 21, 1959.

Several Native Hawaiian organizations have rival claims to sovereignty over the islands. Another group calling itself the Hawaiian Kingdom Government occupied the palace grounds April 30 and has been getting permits to set up on the grounds each week since then. That group claims to be operating a functioning government from the palace grounds.

The ornate palace is operated as a museum of Hawaiian royalty. King Kalakaua built it, and it also served as the residence for his sister and successor, Queen Liliuokalani, the islands' last ruling monarch. Liliuokalani was imprisoned in the palace after the 1893 U.S.-supported overthrow of the monarchy.

After falling into disrepair, the palace was restored in the 1970s as a National Historic Landmark. It now includes a gift shop and is open for school groups and offers tours.

Hawaiian activists have long used the site for protests against the U.S. control of the islands.

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
State Board of Education
Public School System
P.O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950

INVITATION FOR BID
PSS IFB 08-033

The Public School System (PSS) and the State Board of Education are soliciting for competitive sealed biddings for a **One (1) Year Janitorial Services for the PSS Central Offices**. Interested firms are to provide labor, materials and supplies for janitorial services. Detailed information on the Scope of Work are available at the PSS Procurement & Supply Office situated on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950.

All Bid Proposals must be in a sealed envelope face marked **"IFB # 08-033"** and submitted one (1) original with three (3) copies to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office situated on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **September 19, 2008 at 10:00 a.m.** Responsive and Responsible Determination documents must be put in a different envelope marked **"IFB# 08-033, CONFIDENTIAL - Responsive & Responsible Determination"** (I -original with three 3-copies). Any bids after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstances.

Any questions must be in writing and addressed to Mr. Juan D. Babauta, PSS Acting, Procurement & Supply Officer, at fax # (670). 664-3791 or email to *babautajd@pss.cnmi.mp.* Questions must be submitted no later than ten (10) working days prior to the deadline to submit the proposals.

The bidders are requested to submit with their proposal a copy of their valid CNMI Business License to conduct Janitorial Services (Labor, Supply, Maintenance & Services) in the CNMI.

The Public School System reserves the right to award single or multiple awards or to reject any or all proposals if to do so is in the best interest of the Public School System.

All proposals shall become the property of the Public School System.

Inquiries to this proposal announcement may be directed to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office at telephone number 237-3062 or 3035 or faxed to 664-3791.

/S/ Ramon DLG. Diaz, Jr.
Acting, Commisioner of Education

/S/ Juan D. Babauta
PSS Acting, Procurement & Supply Officer

IT IS NEVER TOO LATE!!!
Finish High School
ESL/GED/AS

New students MUST make an appointment at the Adult Basic Education (ABE) Office in Building "G" to take the free placement test

Starting August 21, 2008 1-5 pm in Room K-1 at NMC.

Ongoing/Returning Student Registration:
September 2-3, 2008 10 am to 6 pm in ABE Office.

New Student Registration:
September 4-5, 2008 10 am to 6 pm in ABE Office.

Late Registration:
September 8-9, 2008 8am to 5 pm in ABE Office.

Student Orientation:
September 16, 2008 5-6:30 pm in D-1

NOTHERN MARIANAS COLLEGE
Adult Basic Education Program

Placement Test:	August 21-22, 2008	Th-F	01:00-05:00 PM	K-1
Late Placement Test:	August 25-29, 2008	M-Th	08:30-12:30 PM	K-1
Registration for Returning Students:	September 2-3, 2008	TW	10:00-06:00 PM	ABE
Registration for New Students:	September 4-5 , 2008	ThF	10:00-06:00 PM	ABE
Late Registration:	September 8-9, 2008	MT	08:00-05:00 PM	ABE
CASAS Appraisal Test	September 10-11, 2008	WTh	09:00-10:00 AM	K-1
			01:00-02:00 PM	K-1
			05:00-06:00 PM	K-1
CASAS Pre-Test	September 12 & 15, 2008	FM	09:00-10:30 AM	K-1
			01:00-02:30 PM	K-1
			05:00-06:30 PM	K-1
Student Orientation:	September 16, 2008	T	05:00-06:30 PM	D-1
CASAS Make-Up Tests	September 16, 2008	T	08:00-05:00 PM	K-1
Add/Drop for Students:	September 17-26, 2008		08:00-05:00 PM	ABE

First Day of Instruction:	MWF Classes	September 17, 2008 (Wednesday)
	TTh Classes	September 18, 2008 (Thursday)
	Saturday Classes	September 20, 2008
	Sunday Classes	September 21, 2008
Last Day of Instruction:	December 12, 2008	

This schedule is subject to change. For more information please contact the ABE Office at 234-5498 Ext. 1723 or 1724

This advertisement was paid for from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

MEMBER
The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Mythmaking in Moscow

The events of the past week in the small Caucasus republic of Georgia will prompt animated debates about Russia and U.S.-Russian relations. We view the events as confirmation of the dangerous challenge posed by an authoritarian regime unwilling to recognize the sovereignty of its former imperial possessions. Many will take issue with our interpretation, and that is as it should be. But the debate should be based on facts. Instead, assertions of the Russian leadership that have proved contrary to fact continue to circulate. For example:

Georgia committed genocide against the people of South Ossetia (end ital). This charge was initially leveled by Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and has been taken up by others, including President Dmitry Medvedev, who on Thursday came up with the interesting formulation that South Ossetians "had lived through a genocide." Medvedev has referred to "thousands" killed, and Russian officials frequently have cited 2,000 South Ossetians killed (out of a population of 70,000). They have said Georgia razed the South Ossetian capital of Tskhinvali. These purported depredations are given as the main motivation for Russian military intervention.

A researcher for Human Rights Watch who visited Tskhinvali reported as follows: "A doctor at Tskhinvali Regional Hospital who was on duty from the afternoon of August 7 told Human Rights Watch that between August 6 to 12 the hospital treated 273 wounded, both military and civilians. ... The doctor also said that 44 bodies had been brought to the hospital since the fighting began, of both military and civilians. The figure reflects only those killed in the city of Tskhinvali. But the doctor was adamant that the majority of people killed in the city had been brought to the hospital before being buried, because the city morgue was not functioning due to the lack of electricity in the city."

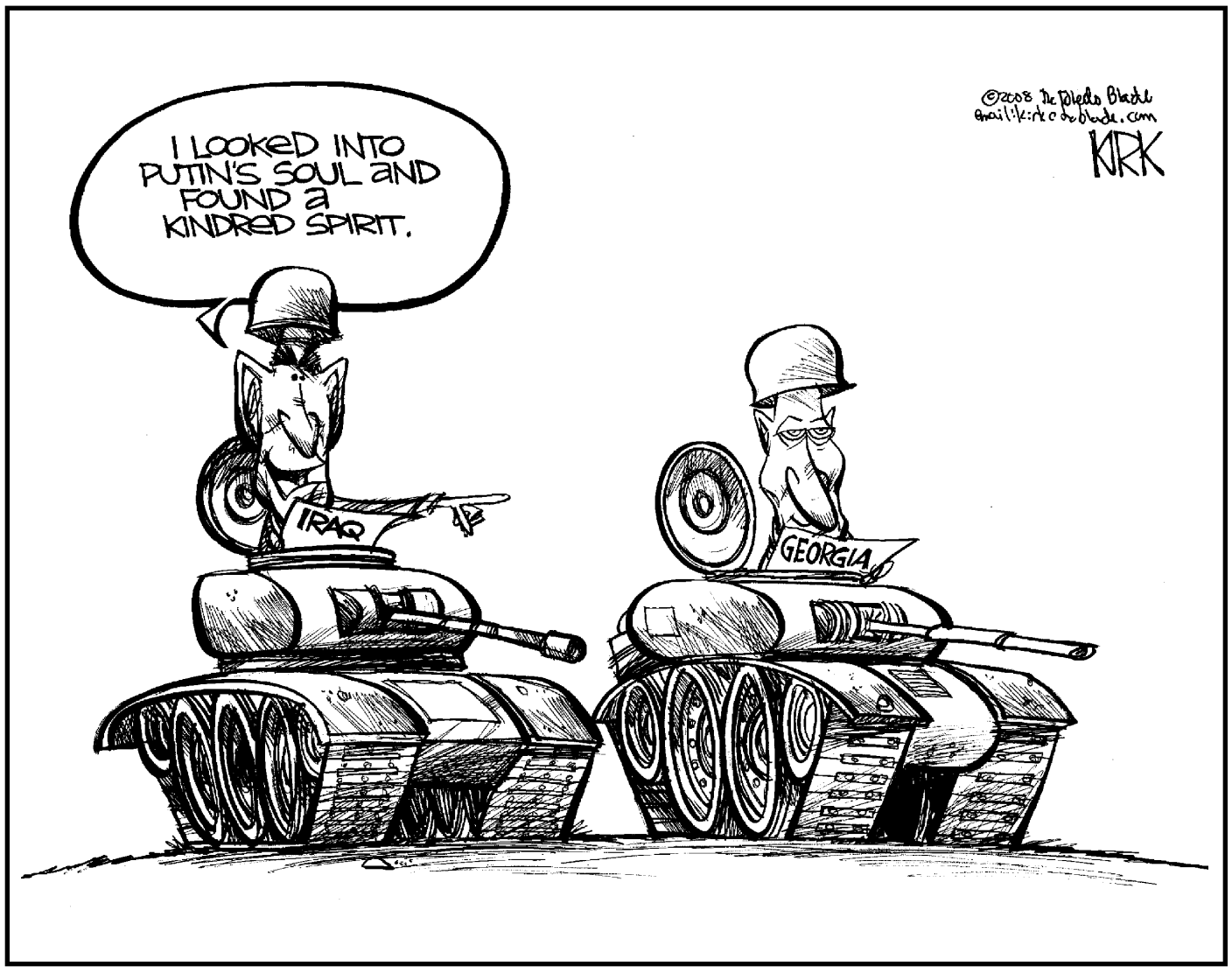
Independent journalists back up the account provided by Human Rights Watch. The Wall Street Journal, for example, Friday reported finding Tskhinvali, where most of the fighting took place, mostly intact and with "little evidence of a high death toll."

Russians in Georgia are "peacekeepers" on a humanitarian mission to protect civilians (end ital). This formulation has alternated with repeated Russian statements, repeatedly disproved, that Russian forces were not in Georgia at all, or were leaving, or were about to leave. In fact, journalists, human rights observers and others have documented that Russian troops have ranged far into Georgia, including the city of Gori and the port of Poti. They have razed, mined and looted Georgian army bases and destroyed civilian houses and apartment buildings.

Militia forces under Russian control include South Ossetians and others brought in from Russia itself — what Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Matthew Bryza described as "the North Caucasus irregular forces that the Russian military inexplicably encouraged to enter South Ossetia to murder, rape and steal." They have attacked civilians in Gori and engaged in ethnic cleansing of Georgian-populated villages in South Ossetia. Remarkably, the Russian-allied "president" of South Ossetia acknowledged the ethnic cleansing Friday in an interview with the Russian newspaper Kommersant, although he did not acknowledge the killings of Georgian civilians that others have documented. Eduard Kokoity said that his forces "offered them a corridor and gave the peaceful population the chance to leave" and that "we do not intend to allow" their return.

A war crime, yes; but at least he was honest about it.

(c) 2008, The Washington Post



We can and will become strong again!—Part II

By ANTHONY PELLEGRINO
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Pellegrino is a longtime businessman in the CNMI and is the former president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.

Last week we discussed the need for our governor to speak directly to us. He must assure us that things are under control while showing us the directions to go in this tumultuous time. Hopefully he will do this. Now let's discuss the next step we must do to regain our direction and courage.

One of the reasons we are in this economic whirlwind spin is that we have not been truthful to ourselves. We have relied on others to do our work for us. We have spent more than we could afford. And we have not planned for the future. Unless we examine where we have been for the past years and where we want to go, there cannot be any change.

Change comes from small beginnings and grows into larger ones slowly.

First, let's begin with a small change that can start in our own backyard. With the high cost of vegetables, why not consider planting a vegetable garden in our yard. Many people in the United States have been doing that successfully for some time.

Two things will happen. First, we will enjoy fresh vegetables at great savings. Second, we will be pleased that we did something to help ourselves without dependence on others. This small act will give us confidence to accept bigger challenges to help ourselves. By planting a vegetable garden we will use our hands and mind to satisfy a need. Imagine the pleasure of sitting down to a plate of vegetables that we grew ourselves. Compare this to the pleasure every fisherman gets when he eats his catch of the day.

Many of our fathers or relatives were skilled tradesmen. Remember? We failed to replace them and turned to outsiders to do our work. As a result we lost the incentive to work with our hands. Instead we settled for a posh government job with tons of benefits at a price we are feeling now.

The next step is to seriously take action to become small business owners and skilled workers. With the inevitable departure of nonresident workers in a few years, we must begin training ourselves to replace them in the skills they have been providing us. Stop thinking of minimum wages. Think instead of what we can do for ourselves. In this manner a small revolution will take place in our community. We must do the work we turned our backs on during the age of cheap labor.

Many of our fathers or relatives were skilled tradesmen. Remember? We failed to replace them and turned to outsiders to do our work. As a result we lost the incentive to work with our hands. Instead we settled for a posh government job with tons of benefits at a price we are feeling now.

One of the most important steps to improving our economy and ourselves is to take over all the small businesses we have so foolishly allowed foreigners to operate. This has happened under the guise of foreign investors. We should be the shop keepers!

A missing part of our cultural background is an entrepreneurial drive. Very few of us have the spirit or know how to operate a business. As a result we have allowed foreigners to take over most of the businesses which we should be operating ourselves. Yet none of these businesses require a high outlay of neither cash nor an especially high educational level. But these businesses demand a commitment of time and effort. Let's take a look at some of them which we can enter if we have a desire.

There are over 140 grocery stores in Saipan. How many are owned and operated by residents? Merely a handful! The rest are owned by foreigners in every village. So we go there and spend our money and let the foreign owner make a profit which should be in the resident owner's pocket. Why don't we have more locally-owned stores?

We have over 70 auto repair shops. How many are locally owned and operated? Only a handful! Why can't we repair cars in locally

See WE CAN on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Letters to the Editor

Are we ready to change?

Dear people of the Commonwealth,

These are dark and troubled times for all of us, to say the least. Power and water outages are actually worsening. The lieutenant governor, secretary of commerce, former CUC executive director, and the lieutenant governor's sister have just been indicted in a CUC public corruption scandal that has shaken the Commonwealth, but perhaps surprised few.

The governor has just declared yet another state of "emergency" on the Commonwealth Ports Authority. The governor also declared a state of "emergency" on CUC on Aug. 1, suspending CUC's procurement regulations, suspending the Public Utilities Commission, and paving the way for a sole-sourced privatization contract. Strangely, it took two whole weeks for news of the CUC "emergency" declaration to break, not just in the papers, but even in the Legislature.

Meanwhile, lawmakers have been trying to figure out how to react. "Close relative of ours that he is, should Timothy Villagomez resign or be removed from his post as lieutenant governor?" (Do we seriously have to ask? Family relations are immaterial. It is fine to presume that he is innocent until proven guilty, but we should not allow Villagomez to remain in public office. He simply cannot maintain his position with any degree of credibility. He should resign or be removed.) "Should James Santos resign or be removed from his post as Secretary of Commerce?" (Yes, for the same reasons that apply to Villagomez.) "Should these damning indictments make us question even more the overall integrity and stability of the administration?" (How could they not?) "Suppose more public officials fall as a result of these CUC investigations?" (Then let justice be served. It is about time. We suffer everywhere and on a daily basis the tangible effects of public corruption. For the sake of our families and our community, I encourage all citizens who have kept quiet about any knowledge they have had about public corruption to come forward with their knowledge to the appropriate authorities.)

And what should the Legislature do about these latest in a series of sweeping and highly questionable emergency declarations by the governor? Should we throw our hands up helplessly like we have every time with every other emergency declaration, and complain to each other at the next session?

Or do we finally have the "numbers," as my colleagues like to call it—and the political courage—to mount a formidable challenge to the Governor's alarming and continuing abuses of power?

In lieu of coming up with any answers to these questions, on Wednesday, Aug. 13 the Saipan delegation held a session to pass two bills that were not even on the agenda and which were introduced as substitutes for completely different bills just that morning. The first took away $165,844 from the so-called "lapsed funds" (they were not "lapsed" and "dormant" as some of my colleagues claimed) of the nearly-completed Street Naming and Street Numbering Project in order to give to various pet projects, some worthier than others. We also passed a bill earmarking $4.7 million in anticipated poker revenues for Fiscal Year 2009, and ultimately gave away:

- **$3million for the SHEFA scholarship program** which has yet to respond in any meaningful way to the Public Auditor's report that details serious improprieties;
- **$450,000 for the Rota Gaming Commission**, without having any idea as to how the money would be spent, or how it would be paid back, or how we would explain ourselves to our Saipan constituents, who voted no to casino gaming in our senatorial district;
- **$100,000, more than doubled from the initial proposal, for the newly-born Marianas Trades Institute**, without so much as a glance at their business license, or a plan as to how the money would be spent;
- **$50,000 for the Little League**, doubling the funding we have given in previous years and ignoring the fact that our children play many other sports in the Commonwealth that do not receive a penny of public funds;
- **$30,000 for the A & E design of yet another baseball field** in Navy Hill;
- **$25,000 for the Fishing Derby**, more than doubled from previous years' funding—a derby in which some of my colleagues personally participate every year;
- **$50,000 for the annual Liberation Day Carnival**, despite allegations of wasteful expenditures of public funds and a pending request from one of our members for an audit; and
- **over $700,000 for the paving of various secondary roads** that most of us had never even heard of.

I voted no to both bills. Five other legislators also voted no to the first bill, but I was the only one to vote no to the second. At the end of the vote, House Speaker Arnold Palacios advised me to "jump on the train" before I get left behind. The train analogy is a favorite in the Legislature; I have heard it countless times in House and Senate sessions. I said that jumping on the train is fine if it is going in the right direction, but if the train is headed towards a cliff, then perhaps it is time to change the drivers. Senate President Pete Reyes remarked that compromise is the nature of lawmaking, but what counts is being able to go home at the end of the day and say that one did something good for the people. And it became clearer than ever to me that lawmakers who can go home and seriously feel like they did something good for the people after passing bills like the ones we passed on Wednesday, are part of what's wrong with the Commonwealth.

The particular culture of gamesmanship and gross irresponsibility that dominates in our Legislature and that places such a stranglehold on democracy in our Commonwealth was not inevitable, nor is it inherent in lawmaking as some of my colleagues would like to believe. It was created over time, and it was created by men—and as such, it can be changed. Lawmakers who see nothing wrong with the way we do business in the Legislature have been there so long they probably *cannot* see it, and probably never will.

Which brings me to the popular initiative to apply the Open Government Act to the Legislature: some have asked me, why should citizens have to work so hard to compel their elected representatives to issue public notices for meetings and to open up their books upon request, like every other government agency and department? And the answer, of course, is that they shouldn't. But it begs the question, why do we continually elect and reelect lawmakers who don't believe the Open Government Act should apply to them?

Why, for that matter, do we elect and reelect public officials who believe that they should be above the law, that they are entitled to the office they hold, that they have been elected only to lead and not to listen, only to lead and not to serve—public officials who have failed us time and time again? Why do so many of us remain silent about the government waste and abuse that we see, despite our growing anger, our mounting bills, our increasing anxieties, and our declining quality of life? How bad do things have to get before we will finally rise up and speak out against the misgovernance that is destroying our beloved community?

Is change possible in the Commonwealth? Yes. Of course it is. But change requires work. It requires honest, fresh, and visionary leaders to get organized, to make a conscientious decision to fight the good fight for our Commonwealth, and to step up to the plate and run for public office. And it requires the awakening of all our people, to realize that we always get the government we deserve, that government should serve the people not the other way around, that we have nothing to fear from those whom we elect to represent us, and that we should finally, once and for all, change the way we vote so that we may also change the way we govern ourselves.

The question is, are we ready to change?

I welcome all questions, comments, and ideas. I can be reached at 664-8931 or 285-3935, or by email at tinasablan@gmail.com.

Tina Sablan
House of Representatives
16th CNMI Legislature

YouTube faux pas

So now the governor opts for an appearance on YouTube instead of facing his constituency. Will his cyberspace debut answer any of the following questions, or will his captive audience instead be subjected to spin after evasion while he freely sole-sources power generation contracts while these questions remain unanswered: 1. Exactly what has the government done to alleviate the power crisis since taking office nearly three years ago as it appropriates and diverts funds to CUC that belong to government employees as pension contributions? 2. Why hasn't the Attorney General insisted on strict performance of the DCM and CISCO contracts AND taken legal action to obtain damages for nonfeasance or malfeasance, while it looks into those additional government officials who have benefited from CUC's illicit contractual relationships? 3. When the United States government was asked to provide a power barge as an alternative to temporary power generation from Agrekko, why was CUC unable to provide the emergency power plan that the U.S. government paid CUC to develop? 4. Why does the only intelligent discussion of solutions to power problems appear on the editorial pages of the local newspapers instead of in the halls of the legislature or at the table of the governor? (Thanks to Dr. Arkle, Ed Propst, Ruth Tighe, and others). 5. How can CUC continue to charge its customers the highest rates in the nation as well as additional surcharges for nonexistent customer service, when there is no rhyme or reason to the power outages, when no one ever answers the phone on the emergency lines, and when no one takes responsibility for, or even bothers to correct, billing errors? Repeated sleep deprivation and spiraling costs extract a price, governor. Least you forget: your virtual audience is also your true employer, and were CUC truly a private company, you would have been out of business long ago.

Phyllis Ain
via e-mail

WE CAN

From Page 10

owned shops? We have over 70 beauty shops and over seven barber shops in Saipan. How many men or ladies know how to work in a beauty shop or a barber shop? Why not?

I was a licensed barber before I became a businessman. In fact I paid for my college tuition working as a barber. Where are all the local nurses we need at the hospital or in private care? Where are the local cooks and bakers in the restaurants and hotels? Where are the local carpenters, electricians, plumbers—the list goes on and on? Why aren't we doing this work ourselves? We are fully capable.

I can hear the arguments about why we cannot do these things. But the reality of the matter is we prefer to work for the government where we are catered to or do a job that requires little training or skill but with many benefits. As a result we have created a false economy built on sand. Meanwhile we keep pleading for help from the outside in the form of more handouts. Why can't we invest in our selves and in our islands? In this manner we truly are people of the land. We must work our land to keep it!

People, help from the outside is not coming unless we want to become a dependent welfare state. In 1999, there were only 3,500 food stamp recipients. Today there are over 8,500 and rising! Why is that?

I have repeatedly said that opportunities here are bountiful. True, some of them will not create an economic boom, but they will help add to it. While we are improving ourselves and competing against foreign owned businesses, we will be amazed at the turnabout in our attitude. Consider the higher income we will realize. But most important is the pride we will feel in helping ourselves.

Forgive my preaching, but we must start helping ourselves. The local government cannot spoon feed us any longer. That era is over. The United States government is not going to tolerate cheap labor any more. So let's stop the crying that our society is going to implode and/or explode when the guest workers leave. It will do neither if we begin now to take over and run our own small businesses. Let the big investors invest in the big projects, but we must control the small businesses.

There is an interesting article in the *Economist* magazine dated Aug. 2, 2008, that discusses the efforts to promote entrepreneurship in the developing world is beginning to bear fruit. So you see the rest of the world is waking up to the fact that its citizens must control its own destiny. We must operate and own our small businesses!

I am willing to meet with any one or group to help in developing the entrepreneurship spirit in our community. I am willing to share my 45 years experience with anyone interested. Please call me at 287-8310 or email me at: tonypell @saipan.com. We must and can run our own small businesses.

Over time, sustained food aid and other types of aid create dependence on handouts and shifts focus away from assisting ourselves. External aid drains our will to help ourselves. It becomes addictive. Over time, there's a loss of key skills, and a country that doesn't have to feed itself or doesn't know how to, becomes a country that can't.

There is no reason why all the small businesses cannot be operated by us. Until we begin to operate them, we will be at a disadvantage and dependent on outside help. Unfortunately, outside help will not come because it is here with us, if only we embrace it. It resides within us if we want it. Let's become an island of small business operators. We can and must be strong again. But it can only be done by us!

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms. Light southeast winds.	Mostly sunny with isolated showers. Light and variable winds.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲88° ▼76°	▲88° ▼77°

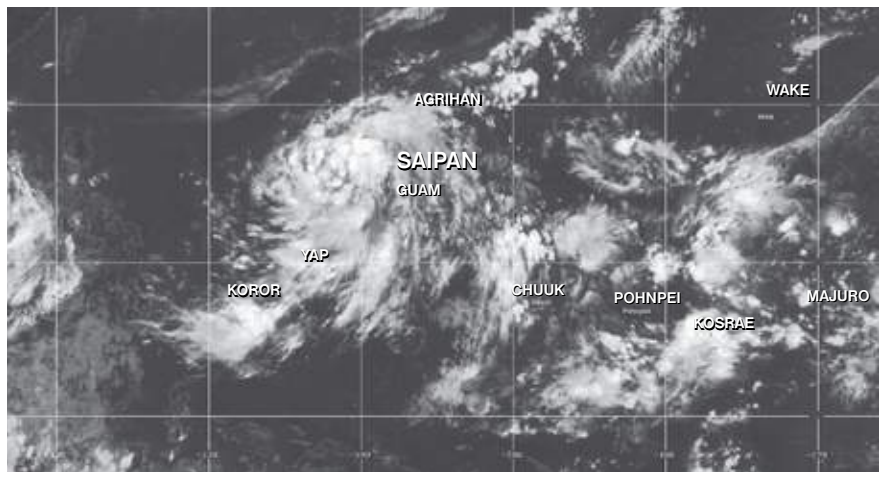
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲86	▼77
Palau	Mostly Cloudy	▲87	▼77
Yap	Mostly Cloudy	▲87	▼77
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲87	▼77
Pohnpei	Mostly Cloudy	▲87	▼73
Kosrae	Cloudy	▲87	▼76
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲81	▼74

Around The Globe

Auckland	Cloudy	▲54	▼46
Beijing	Showers	▲86	▼70
Hong Kong	Thundershowers	▲88	▼80
Honolulu	Showers	▲84	▼76
London	Rain	▲68	▼54
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲82	▼64
Manila	Thunderstorms	▲87	▼77
Melbourne	Mostly Cloudy	▲54	▼45
Miami	Rain	▲89	▼80
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲89	▼72
Osaka	Thunderstorms	▲88	▼76
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	▲70	▼57
Pusan	Mostly Cloudy	▲85	▼70
Rome	Sunny	▲85	▼63
Salem	Showers	▲78	▼57
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲68	▼58
Seoul	Rain	▲78	▼71
Tokyo	Cloudy	▲80	▼74
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲90	▼68

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, SUNDAY, AUGUST 17, 2008
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Tropical depression 13W west of Guam centered near 15N141E is moving westward. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are within an area from near Yap and across the Mariana Islands westward. The area is bounded by a line from 19N137E to 20N145E to 15N148E to 8N142E to 11N134E back to 19N137E. Winds converging toward a monsoon trough are producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms across Palau west of a line from 9N135E to 7N136E to 4N133E. Low-level convergence is causing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms from Kosrae southwestward or within 200 miles of a line from 7N165E to 2N162E to 3N155E. Remnants of tropical storm Kika centered near 9N163E are triggering thunderstorms far west of Kwajalein or within 100 miles of a line from 11N162E to 8N165E. Trade-wind convergence is causing scattered showers southeast of Majuro within 200 miles of a line from 5N172E eastward past 6N180. Divergent upper-level winds associated with a trough over Eake Island are causing scattered showers and thunderstorms in two areas. One area is within 100 miles of a line from 18N155E to 12N168E. The other area is within 100 miles of a line from 13N154E to 10N157E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

2:40AM Today	Low Tide:	0.9 Feet
7:53AM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
2:48PM Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet
9:17PM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:03AM	6:39 PM
Tuesday	6:03AM	6:38 PM
Wednesday	6:03AM	6:37 PM
Thursday	6:03AM	6:37 PM
Friday	6:03AM	6:36 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	7:31PM	6:55AM
Tuesday	8:09PM	7:47AM
Wednesday	8:48PM	8:39AM
Thursday	9:29PM	9:34AM
Friday	10:15PM	10:31AM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
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- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JULY 18, 2008

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
Saipan-Rota				**Rota-Saipan**			
CO 9313	8:30am	9:05am	3,4,7	CO 9598	11:10am	11:45am	1,2,6
Saipan-Guam				**Guam-Saipan**			
CO9317	4:00am	4:50am	Daily	CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	Daily
CO9597	8:30am	9:20am	1,2,5,6	CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9313	8:30am	10:00am	3,4,7 via Rota	CO9598	10:15am	11:45am	1,2,6 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily	CO9600	10:45am	11:35am	3,4,5,7
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily	CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily	CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily	CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
Saipan-Narita				**Narita-Saipan**			
NW 099	5:00am	7:40am	Daily	NW 076	10:15am	2:55pm	Daily
NW 078	8:55am	2:00pm	Daily	NW 077	6:25pm	1:30am+1	Daily
NW 075	4:45pm	7:25pm	Daily	NW 100	8:45pm	1:25am+1	Daily
Saipan-Osaka				**Osaka-Saipan**			
NW 083	4:20pm	7:05pm	Daily	NW 084	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily
Saipan-Nagoya				**Nagoya-Saipan**			
NW 078	8:55am	11:35am	Daily	NW 077	9:00pm	1:30am+1	Daily
Saipan-Seoul				**Seoul-Saipan**			
OZ 604	2:20am	6:00am	1	OZ 605	9:00am	2:30pm	2,4,6,7
OZ 604	2:50am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7	OZ 603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7	OZ 603	8:10pm	1:40am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
Saipan-Busan				**Busan-Saipan**			
OZ 608	3:50am	7:20am	1,4,5,7	OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	3,4,6,7
Guam-Manila				**Manila-Guam**			
CO 891	6:00am	10:30am	3 via Yap and Koror	CO 894	11:20am	4:55pm	2,7
				CO 894	7:45pm	1:20am+1	6
CO 893	6:30am	8:05am	6	CO 892	9:45pm	6:30am+1	3 via Koror and Yap
CO 893	8:25am	10:00am	2,7				
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	5 via Koror	CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	5 via Koror
CO 933	7:00pm	8:40pm	Daily	CO 934	10:55pm	4:30am+1	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7	PR 110	10:20pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7
Saipan-Guanzhou				**Guanzhou-Saipan**			
CZ 3008	5:00am	8:00am	2,6	CZ 3007	8:00pm	4:00am+1	1,5
Guam-Hongkong				**Hongkong-Guam**			
CO 909	6:40pm	9:25pm	1,5	CO 910	10:35pm	5:15am+1	1,5
Guam-Rota				**Rota-Guam**			
CO 9598	10:15am	10:45am	1,2,6	CO 9313	9:30am	10:00am	3,4,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Letters to the Editor

Culturally bound to the ocean

A recent comment on the Marianas Variety website posed the following questions:

1. Is funding guaranteed from the federal government for the programs that you speak of once the monument is designated?

2. If we are to have rights to the land, will we be allowed at least a buffer zone to fish for livelihood or will we need to just raise land animals for food?

The answer to the first question is "Yes." Every marine area managed under this federal program has funding and staff—including Papah_naumoku_kea Marine National Monument in Hawaii and Fagatelle Bay National Marine Sanctuary in American Samoa.

The 14 sanctuaries/monuments in the United States currently receive annual funding of more than $40 million. A recent economic analysis of this issue by Professor Tom Iverson at the University of Guam estimated funding for the proposed monument in CNMI of $1.5 million to $2 million annually—not counting funding for boats, a visitor center and other facilities.

The second question implies that the three northern islands could be suitable places to live. In fact, all three islands are volcanic, tiny in size and lacking fresh water. Saipan is 10 times larger than the combined area of all three.

According to Article XIV, Section 2 of the CNMI constitution, the islands of Asuncion, Maug, and Uracas are sanctuaries that "…shall be maintained as uninhabited places and used only for the preservation and protection of natural resources…."

No one is allowed to live on these islands, a permit is required to visit, and nothing can be removed from them—not even ayuyu or fanihi. Furthermore, these islands are located more than 300 miles north of Saipan so the cost involved in traveling there to commercially fish is likely to be prohibitive.

The Mariana Trench Marine Monument proposal would restrict commercial extraction, but would be sensitive to the need to continue allowing traditional cultural practices in this area. Pew understands that we are culturally bound to the ocean and that this is an important issue for the residents of the CNMI.

Angelo Villagomez
Ocean Legacy - Saipan Coordinator

Short takes on the latest 'comments' from CUC

"CUC down to two engines"; "With the current state of the engines, there is not much CUC can do to alleviate the situation, Muña said. We've pushed them so hard, it's really beyond our control, that's what we're observing…" OK, so please explain to me just HOW the addition of ONLY 15 megawatts (the Aggreko engines) will alleviate the problem of not enough power on Saipan? Seems to me there will be several more of these ignominious sole source contracts let out—and soon. So, why wouldn't it have been better to BUY the offered NEW engines if the current engines are "beyond our control?"

"The engines are experiencing further breakdown and wear and tear, he said. Metal fragmentations could cause potential problems, he added." Whoa, hold on! IF those engines are in that bad a shape (and they probably are), then they won't be able to continue running after the installation of Aggreko's 15 megawatts (if they even last that long). Again, I ask you, how is that going to help alleviate the power situation? It will continue as is, or worse. How many more "Aggreko" contracts will we need? And at what cost before they finally decide to do the right thing?

"The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. will soon use some of its vast Rydlyme stockpile, according to CUC executive Director Anthony Muña. For example, he said, the stockpile on Rota was put there to address problems with the power engines there." WOW! 8,000 GALLONS, just for Rota. Yeah sure, Rota with its vast world renowned power plant is sure to use it all up…in, say, about a thousand years. Nothing like planning for the future, is there? Could this maybe be considered tampering with evidence (i.e. No evidence, no case)?

"We're going to use the chemical to flush the system out," Muña said. OK, so please explain to me why is it that the two private IPPs in the NMI (and every other IPP in the country) have stated they use only purified water in their systems so they don't get a "scaling" problem in the first place? Why? Because the chemical used to remove internal scaling CAN BE dangerous to the internal systems and is not recommended for this use. It even states in the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for the chemical that it CAN cause holes in systems and leaks by removing the "scales" and exposing pre-existing corrosion! According to the MSDS, Rydlyme has an acidic pH so low that it was "unreadable, generally < 3", its LD50 was "not supplied" and the product is only NSF/ANSI 60 "registered for use in beverage, pharmaceutical, bottling, poultry, and other food processing plants." Please, Mr. Muña, don't try to justify the unjustifiable.

"Muña said the state of emergency was necessary to expedite the arrival of the Aggreko generators." Well, if that really was the case, then why was the legislature pressured into creating a separate "law," simultaneously, to do the same thing? And if they were to be "expedited", why were they put on three separate ships spaced out over a two week period? What a waste of time! Was the wool pulled over somebody's eyes here?

"As to why some lawmakers only learned about the declaration on Thursday, Reyes said the document was stamped Aug. 1 and received by the Senate President and the House Speaker." "We are in communication with the Senate President and Speaker. They are aware. I think what might have happened is maybe they didn't get this information from their leadership." Good grief Charlie Brown—what a quote! Seems to me the Senate President and the House Speaker ARE the leadership for the legislature. So who is "THEIR leadership?" RIGHT! The Governor! Mr. Reyes, puhleeze, this is not even a decent "spin." They were stamped Aug. 1 all right (I saw it), but you didn't say WHEN they were supposedly "received" by the Senate President or House Speaker! It appears your "tang is so tongueled" up now, you don't even know what you're saying.

One thing for sure: NO-ONE got a copy of that "emergency declaration" between the time it was signed on Aug. 1 until it became known through publication of it in the CNMI Register on the 14th as required by law. WHY? Sneaky at best! And who ever heard of an emergency disaster that could blow up and cause human injury or death at any moment taking TWO WEEKS to become known? How would the perpetrators of this so-called declaration have felt if those engines had done exactly that (blown up) during the time that declaration was apparently kept secret?

"The Fitial administration assured yesterday that the utility agency, under the new leadership of executive director Tony Muña, is not going to allow improper contracts to be executed." "We would like to assure the public and the people of the Legislature that this is a different situation now," Reyes said. Yes, it surely is! Have you read that thing? It actually allows the GOVERNOR ALONE to completely bypass ALL legislative laws, mandates and other avenues of oversight and protection AND eliminates oversight or perusal by any other agency, including the PUC AND allows the GOVERNOR ALONE to execute any contract he deems necessary or desirable to ANY "PERSON." And yet, they "assure" us that "no improper contracts will be executed." Do you really believe that? Uh-huh. Sure, real "teamwork" if I ever saw it!

This whole thing just gets more and more bizarre every day, and unbelievable to boot, as story after story continues to emanate (spin) from the executive branch's minions and amass into a tangled web of innuendo, deceit, and contradiction. For the moment, the democratic system of "tri-branch" checks and balances seems to have been waylaid as one branch, the executive, runs rampant in what it terms "in the best interest of the public." Meanwhile, the other two branches seem to be languishing in a state of stupor while they "try to sort out" the ramifications of what is happening. In fact, one of them, the judicial, seems to have lapsed into a state of total unconsciousness!

And, back at the ranch, citizens are escaping in record numbers and businesses are closing up while the rest of the "trapped" citizens are left to cope with a daily life so ridden with hardships that they too are in a state of stupor and unwilling, or unable, to effectively transmit their strife or force the changes necessary in a government apparently "gone berserk." A government that is supposed to benefit the people that it represents, who, in the ultimate scheme of things are the boss, not one that beleaguers them mercilessly with seemingly un-interpretable folderol and an endless stream of inconceivable clap-trap.

Sometimes, voters make a mistake. Maybe a mistake was made here in the NMI at the last election. Mistakes can and should be corrected. To fail to do so at the earliest opportunity, or to create the opportunity when the mistake is realized, only serves to perpetuate and validate the mistake. Then, it becomes the fault of the perpetuators and no excuse is left. Don't be a perpetuator.

Dr. Thomas D. Arkle Jr.,
San Jose, Tinian

The race card

Since I have been pretty vocal about my disagreements with the Fitial administration and the general leadership of the CNMI, I have had my fair share of criticism. I welcome it. I may not always be right, but I will tell you how I feel. I don't want to sugarcoat things anymore. We have six random power outages every single day. Can any of us really bite our tongues anymore?

While I welcome criticism, I am disappointed with some of the anonymous, unintelligent comments I get from time to time. I was hoping to engage in intelligent conversation and debate. Instead, I often get bigoted "You're not from here so shaddup your mouth!" remarks.

Why do people have to resort to racism and bigotry? I don't get it. Is it a bad thing to be Filipino, German, Norwegian, Chinese, Spanish, and Irish? That is what I am in blood. But what I am in my heart and mind is local. After being raised here since I was four and after growing up in a neighborhood with kids of different ethnic backgrounds, I just can't understand the whole racism thing.

I know that racism exists everywhere in the world. That doesn't make it right. We need to stop teaching our children what separates us, and start teaching them what unites us.

I have always admired the Civil Rights movement and its greatest leaders, particularly the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. One of his greatest quotes continues to inspire me: "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character."

My two children will be taught the value and importance of their Chamorro culture and heritage. They will be taught to respect and amen their elders; they will be taught to understand the history and language of the Chamorros; they will be taught the spirituality, superstitions, beliefs, myths, legends, and ways of the Chamorros; they will be taught to be generous and giving like the true Chamorros.

The true Chamorros are a great people, and I am proud to have so many of them as family and friends, and I thank them all for welcoming me and allowing me to be a part of their home for the past 35 years. Racism is not a trait of the Chamorros; rather, it is a trait of ignorance. I have experienced random acts of racism here, but it has only been at the hands of a few small-minded individuals.

While I have been subjected to a few racist attacks here, I want you to know that I have also experienced racism in mainland America. When I was 12 years old visiting my grandparents in Paris, Illinois, I was chased by a truck filled with teenagers who were shouting things like "You Spic! You wetback! Go swim home! We don't want your kind!" I fortunately survived, but I never forgot that day. I was so young and naive and had no idea what a *wetback* was! That truck load of teenagers does not represent all of America. It represents xenophobia and small-mindedness.

I am proud to be an American, and I am proud to be a local from the CNMI. I will continue to speak my mind and speak about the issues. Yes, I am not Chamorro by blood. But that should not preclude me from having the right to speak about what is right and what is wrong about my beloved home of Saipan. It does not matter if I have lived here for 35 years or 35 days. I love Saipan, and I will continue to fight for it. This is home.

And for those of you who do not like what I say, I ask you to challenge me. No, not in a fistfight. This is not high school anymore, and we need to stop using our fists and start using the minds that God gave us. I ask you to challenge my views. Don't just tell me I am wrong. Tell me how and why I am wrong. Tell me why it is wrong to question our leaders and hold them accountable for their misdeeds. Tell me why it is wrong to challenge the Old Boys Network. Tell me why it is wrong to challenge the decades of decadence at CUC. In short, tell me why it is wrong to go against the grain.

I will take criticism any day and any time. But please, let's not make it about race. We can all do better than that. I am what I am—a haolepino who loves this island, and knows that it is in dire need of change.

Ed Propst
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Business

Oil touches 3-month low on stronger US dollar

NEW YORK (AP)—Oil fell to its lowest price in three months Friday, briefly touching the $111 level after the dollar muscled higher and OPEC predicted the world's thirst for fuel next year will fall to its lowest point since 2002.

Light, sweet crude for September delivery fell $1.24 to settle at $113.77 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange after falling to $111.34, its lowest price since May 2 and more than $35—or 24 percent—below its July 11 trading record above $147.

As high energy costs force countries around the globe to cut back on consumption, crude prices have plummeted and are now within striking distance of $100 a barrel, a level first reached Feb. 19.

At the pump, retail gas prices also continued falling, with a gallon of regular shedding about half a penny overnight to a new national average of $3.771, according to auto club AAA, the Oil Price Information Service and Wright Express. Gas peaked at $4.114 on July 17.

Crude fell after the dollar gained strength against the euro on U.S. data showing that industrial output rose more than expected in July. The 15-nation euro has lost some of its luster compared to its American rival amid growing evidence that European economies are slowing. The euro bought $1.4675 in trading Friday, down from $1.4811 late Thursday.

A rising dollar typically pushes oil prices lower as investors who buy crude and other commodities as hedges against inflation start dumping their positions to cut their losses. A stronger greenback also makes dollar-denominated commodities more expensive to overseas buyers, further eroding demand.

"The dollar is on fire again so that's causing people to re-evaluate everything," said Phil Flynn, oil analyst at Alaron Trading Corp. in Chicago. "It means oil prices could fall dramatically. We could see prices get to double digits if this continues."

Oh thank heaven!
3.95 9/10 Regular Unleaded Gasoline
4.05 9/10 Mid Grade Unleaded Gasoline
4.15 9/10 Premium Unleaded Gasoline

AP

Lowering gas prices posted at 7-11 gas station in Antioch, Calif., Thursday, Aug. 14, 2008. "Oh thank heaven," is one of 7-11's slogans. At the pump, retail gas prices slid further. A gallon of regular fell about a penny overnight to a new national average of $3.778, according to auto club AAA, the Oil Price Information Service and Wright Express.

Industrial output up 0.2 percent in July

WASHINGTON (AP)—Industrial output rose in July at a slightly better pace than expected as a further rebound in the auto industry offset a big plunge in output at the nation's utilities.

The Federal Reserve reported Friday that industrial production edged up 0.2 percent last month. That was half the pace of the 0.4 percent gain in June, but it did surpass analysts' expectations for flat production in July.

The increase reflected a 0.4 percent gain in output at manufacturing plants. Motor vehicles and parts showed the biggest increase in manufacturing, advancing for a third straight month.

These gains were not seen as signaling a sustained rebound, however, given the problems facing the auto industry this year. Instead, the rebound in auto activity was viewed as a temporary improvement because a strike ended at parts supplier American Axle.

Even with the recent gains, production at auto plants remained 10.4 percent below where it was a year ago as automakers struggle with slumping demand due to the weak economy and the big spike in gasoline prices, which has hurt sales of their once-popular sport utility vehicles.

The modest increases in June and July production had followed three straight monthly declines. The manufacturing sector has been battered by the prolonged slump in housing and the multiple problems in the auto industry. Many economists viewed the slight strength in the past two months as temporary given what's ailing the broader economy.

"Unfortunately, housing activity continues to worsen, job losses continue, inflation is rampant, credit is more difficult to obtain and firms remain cautious about capital investments," said Daniel Meckstroth, chief economist for the Manufacturers Alliance/MAPI. "We think manufacturing will remain in a slow, shallow, downward trend until early 2009."

Breaking up big banks questioned as losses mount

NEW YORK (AP)—America's biggest banks have suffered unprecedented losses from the ongoing credit crisis, and that's made some investors question whether the big financial conglomerates should be broken up in order to survive.

Break-up advocates, who for months have been clamoring for Citigroup Inc. to be dismantled, got some validation of their viewpoint this past week. Europe's UBS AG—created through the combination of Swiss Bank Corp. and Union Bank of Switzerland in 1997—on Wednesday laid the groundwork to tear up its business model after another quarter of steep losses.

Though the UBS announcement was expected, it was nonetheless a departure from what executives promised during a wave of big bank deals that began in the late 1990s. The creators of global banks like Citigroup, JPMorgan Chase & Co., and HSBC Holdings PLC had promised customers and shareholders that a diverse set of businesses would shield them from economic volatility.

But, those models haven't sheltered the banks from the subprime mortgage crisis that turned into a dislocation of the credit markets. Major global banks have taken more than $300 billion in asset write-downs, and organizations like the International Monetary Fund believe that amount could reach $1 trillion.

"The whole idea was, 'let's be so unbelievably diversified that we won't be affected,' but when the credit markets seize up, no matter what kind of financial company you are, everything seizes up," said William Smith, president of New York-based Smith Asset Management. "The UBS statement basically shows the model is a failure."

Former DirecTV head named *LA Times* publisher

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Eddy Hartenstein, a former head of DirecTV, will become publisher of the Los Angeles Times, the newspaper reported Saturday.

Hartenstein, a pioneering satellite television executive with no newspaper experience, will take over Monday. His job will be to invigorate a newspaper that has cut back hundreds of jobs as it struggles with plunging circulation and ad revenue in the Internet age.

Hartenstein will be the fourth Times publisher since the newspaper was acquired in 2000 by the Chicago-based Tribune Co. The post has been vacant since David Hiller resigned on July 14, the same day that Tribune began implementing more staff cutbacks.

Hartenstein, 57, said he was approached for the job about a month ago by Tribune chief Sam Zell, who did not demand any more cuts.

"I wanted to know that I would have the ability . . . to call the shots," Hartenstein said Friday.

Zell "basically said 'You're the publisher and CEO. It's yours to run,'" Hartenstein said.

Hartenstein, a Caltech-educated engineer, is considered one of the founding fathers of satellite television. He was working for Hughes Electronics Corp., which was later acquired by General Motors Corp., when he began considering the use of satellites to deliver TV programming.

In the 1990s, he persuaded GM to finance a venture that would become DirecTV Group Inc. He became the company's president and was chairman and CEO from 2001 to 2004.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Merrill facing NY lawsuit over securities sale

NEW YORK (AP)—New York Attorney General Andrew Cuomo said Friday he sent a letter to Merrill Lynch & Co. notifying the investment bank that his office will file suit against it imminently as part of an investigation into the collapse of the auction-rate securities market. "We have been trying to resolve the matter," with Merrill, Cuomo said during a conference call with reporters. Cuomo said he has not been able to reach a satisfactory agreement with the bank. The letter sent to Merrill, which was given to reporters by Cuomo's office, is similar to one Citigroup Inc. received before settling with the attorney general. Cuomo is one of several regulators investigating whether financial companies misled investors in the auction-rate securities market; officials from several other states and the Securities and Exchange Commission have also been involved in negotiations with the big banks.

JC Penney's 2Q profits fall 36 percent

NEW YORK (AP)—J.C. Penney Co. reported a 36 percent drop in second-quarter profits Friday and issued a downbeat outlook for the current quarter as shoppers cut back on clothing spending in a tough economy. The Plano, Texas-based department store chain said it earned $117 million, or 52 cents per share, in the three-month period ended Aug. 2, compared with $182 million, or 81 cents per share, a year earlier. Total net sales fell 2.5 percent to $4.28 billion from $4.39 billion. Same-store sales, or sales at stores opened at least a year, fell 4.3 percent. Same-store sales are considered a key indicator of a retailer's health. Analysts polled by Thomson Reuters expected earnings of 50 cents per share on revenue of $4.28 billion.

Hershey to raise prices 11 percent

HERSHEY, Pa. (AP)—The Hershey Co. said Friday it is raising prices on its products by an average of 11 percent as the nation's largest candymaker tries to stem the impact of soaring commodities costs, and trimmed its projections for 2008 and 2009. The price increase was the second already this year for the candy company known for its Hershey's chocolate bars, bite-sized Kisses and Reese's peanut butter cups. The immediate increase was necessary to offset "significant increases" in the cost of raw materials such as sugar, cocoa and peanuts—up as much as 45 percent since the start of the year—as well as the growing cost of fuel, utilities and transportation, Hershey said. "Commodity costs have been volatile over the last several years and continue to remain at levels that are well above historical averages," Hershey's President and Chief Executive David J. West said in a statement.

Netflix resumes normal shipping after 3-day glitch

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Online DVD rental leader Netflix Inc. resumed normal shipments Friday after its distribution centers were crippled by three days of severe technical problems, a spokesman said. The Los Gatos-based company also offered a 15 percent credit to customers whose discs were delayed by the outage, the longest disruption in service since Netflix launched its subscription service nine years ago. The outage held up shipments for about a third of the company's 8.4 million subscribers, meaning the total value of the credits could run into the millions of dollars. The credits will automatically appear on customers' next billing statement, according to Netflix spokesman Steve Swasey. People who were trying out Netflix with its two-week free trial offer will have the trial period extended by one week if their shipments were held up. The company has declined to say what caused the outage, which affected all 55 of Netflix's shipping centers. Netflix was able to ship some discs Wednesday and Thursday but none on Tuesday, when the problem was first disclosed.

Nation

Obama and McCain split on abortion

LAKE FOREST, Calif. (AP)—Presidential contenders Barack Obama and John McCain differed sharply on abortion Saturday, with McCain saying a baby's human rights begin "at conception," while Obama restated his support for legalized abortion.

Appearing on the same stage for the first time in months, although they overlapped only briefly, the two men shared their views on a range of moral, foreign and domestic issues as they near their respective nominating conventions.

Obama said he would limit abortions in the late stages of pregnancy if there are exceptions for the mother's health. He said he knew that people who consider themselves pro-life will find his stance "inadequate."

He said the government should do more to prevent unwanted pregnancies and to help struggling new mothers, such as providing needed resources to the poor, and better adoption services.

McCain expressed his anti-abortion stand simply and quickly, saying human rights begin the instant a human egg is fertilized. McCain, who adopted a daughter from Bangladesh, also called for making adoption easier.

The men's comments came at a two-hour forum on faith hosted by the minister Rick Warren at his megachurch in Orange County, Calif. Obama joined Warren for the first hour, and McCain for the second. The two candidates briefly shook hands and hugged each other during the switch.

Warren asked both men the same questions. McCain said he did not see or hear Obama's session, which might have given him an advantage.

Obama said America's greatest moral failure is its insufficient help to the disadvantaged. He noted that the Bible quotes Jesus as saying "whatever you do for the least of my brothers, you do for me." He said the maxim should apply to victims of poverty, sexism and racism.

McCain said the nation's greatest moral shortcoming is its failure to "devote ourselves to causes greater than our self-interests."

AP

Republican presidential candidate, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., left, and Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., reach out to shake hands during the Compassion Forum at the Saddleback Church, Saturday, Aug. 16, 2008 in Lake Forest, Calif. Host Rick Warren is seen at center.

Forecasters: Floridians should prepare for hurricane

KEY WEST, Fla. (AP)—Residents and tourists in the Florida Keys prepared Saturday for Tropical Storm Fay, which forecasters said could strengthen to a hurricane and begin battering the island chain as soon as Monday.

Florida Gov. Charlie Crist declared a state of emergency because Fay "threatens the state of Florida with a major disaster," he wrote in an executive order.

Forecasters predicted Saturday evening that the sixth named storm of the 2008 season would make landfall somewhere along western coast of Florida on Tuesday as a hurricane, said Corey Walton, a hurricane support meteorologist at the National Hurricane Center in Miami.

Officials in the Keys' Monroe County said they would likely order an evacuation of all visitors on Sunday morning. A decision on whether to require all residents to evacuate was to come, county spokeswoman Becky Herrin said.

Keys emergency officials often take the precaution of ordering early evacuations when a storm threatens, because traffic can back up for miles on the single highway to Florida's mainland.

Besides the threat of damage from high winds, most of the islands sit at sea level and could be flooded by Fay's storm surge. Flooding from the storm on Saturday killed four people in the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

At 11 p.m. EDT, Fay's center was located about 100 miles north-northeast of Kingston, Jamaica, and moving west at 14 miles per hour. The storm had maximum sustained winds of 45 mph.

State officials in Tallahassee opened their emergency operations center, said Blair Heusdens, a spokeswoman for the state's Division of Emergency Management.

"We like to have the executive order in place before the storm," Heusdens said. "That way we can have our resources ready."

ACROSS THE NATION

Bear attacks inside Anchorage have people on edge

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)—Even in a city whose logo is "Big Wild Life," the summer of 2008 is testing residents' tolerance for large carnivores. The problem is bears, black bears and bigger grizzlies. So far this summer, three people have been mauled in the city. Some people say humans are to blame for the confrontations and insist that no bears should be killed because of the attacks. On the other side is a growing chorus of people like Devon Rees, who want something done about the big bruins. "It is pretty much unsafe to walk around at night," he said. On one recent evening, Rees heard splashing in the creek near his Eagle River home and assumed it was salmon. Seconds later, however, a bear rushed at him from the woods and knocked him to the ground. "I wasn't going to lay down and take it. The bear came and tried to fight me," said Rees, 18, who works in a meat store. "I started punching it in the head, kicking it and elbowing it ... I was boxing him using one arm to defend, one arm to strike." Residents share the municipality—covering more than 1 million acres and with more than 360,000 people—with more than 300 black bears and 50 to 60 grizzlies.

Mystery surrounds death of NYC Renaissance man

NEW YORK (AP)—Mark Chamberlain did everything to become a hip, high-tech New Yorker. He ran away from home in Seattle at 15 to make it in the nation's biggest city. He became a club kid, a model, a Web pioneer, one of CNN's first blog reporters—and finally, a spiky-haired tattooed artist called Cal Chamberlain. To fans of his Internet-based TV program, "High Weirdness," he was the charming, darkly witty Judge Cal who spoke of politics while getting his lip pierced. Then, suddenly, he was dead at 41 - the cause still a mystery three weeks later. Hundreds of friends planned to attend a memorial Saturday night at the Theater for the New City in Manhattan's East Village. With Chamberlain's body in a Manhattan morgue, a rose-filled casket on a makeshift altar was to hold objects reflecting a life both thrilling and sad. The casket and its contents are to be burned in effigy this month at the Burning Man arts festival in Nevada's Black Rock Desert, where Chamberlain's ashes are to be scattered. For the festival, he recently helped create a mammoth metal sculpture featuring parts of 18-wheelers.

5 children among 7 killed in Memphis house fire

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—An early Saturday morning fire killed five children and two adults, but three youths were able to escape and were being treated for burns. Next-door neighbor Lamar Boyce said he was awakened around 5:30 a.m. by the victims' cries for help and saw two of the survivors jump from a second-story window. The two teenagers and an 11-year-old boy who escaped were hospitalized with second-degree burns on their faces and hands, Fire Department spokesman Lt. Keith Staples said. Boyce said the two-story brick and wood-frame house was engulfed in flames and windows were popping out from the heat when he and his girlfriend, Nikko Moore, rushed to try helping the victims. "She tried to put the water hose on it to do what we could do, but by that time it was too late," Boyce said. "It was too much fire. The water hose wouldn't do nothing." Lorenzo Williams, who lives down the street in the low-income neighborhood, said he and several other neighbors also tried to help but flames and smoke turned them back.

9/11 aid groups close or adapt as money wanes

NEW YORK (AP)—Terry Grace Sears knows she has still has work to do helping the families of Sept. 11 victims, seeing the proof last week on the faces of kids just beginning to open up about their parents' deaths in the terror attack.

"This year, some kids were able to express things for the first time," Sears said after a summer retreat for the children. "Particularly the young boys were grieving."

But Sears, executive director of a charity called Tuesday's Children, isn't sure how many more kids she will be able to help. Her agency and others like it are struggling to stay afloat as donations dry up nearly seven years after the attack.

Several are closing, some are cutting budgets and others are rethinking their purpose as donors become harder to persuade.

"We fight every day for money," said Sears, whose charity cut its staff by a third last year to 11 people.

The groups sprang up after Sept. 11, offering everything from counseling to music lessons to families of the victims. They have long relied on funding from an American Red Cross long-term relief fund that distributed more than $1 billion in direct aid and recovery grants to over 100 organizations.

But on June 30, the Red Cross distributed its last $40 million to 26 groups it still funded. Two groups have grants that last a few more months.

"We have no more money to award," said Joan Hernandez, deputy director of the Red Cross' Sept. 11 recovery program. The program used to have nearly 300 employees and now has two, she said. "We will be gone at the end of the year."

The last grants included $1.37 million to South Nassau Communities Hospital on Long Island, which shut down counseling programs for thousands of family members and first responders when the Red Cross funding expired. One of those programs, the World Trade Center Family Center, recently changed its name to 9/11 Forward to help participants look to the future.

Road proposal riles activists in Roosevelt country

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP)—Plans to turn a secluded Badlands trail into a major road and river crossing might not have created such a stir if not for where it is: near the ranch where Theodore Roosevelt helped conceive the American conservation movement.

But as it is, hundreds of people and groups have flooded the officials in charge with their thoughts on the proposal, which has been stalled for years but now appears to be moving closer to reality.

Billings County officials want a crossing over the Little Missouri River and a road north of Medora to connect state Highways 16 and 85. Proponents say it would cut as much as 100 miles off commutes, encourage economic development, and help fire trucks and ambulances respond faster.

"Our plan is not an evil plan, and we are not trying to terrorize the people who love the Badlands," said Jim Arthaud, a county commissioner. "We need this and we have a legal right to it."

But opponents fear it will become a road heavy with RVs and traffic from the area's oil booming industry, ruining an area that inspired the conservation-minded president.

"Teddy Roosevelt would be going nuts over this," said Wayde Schafer, a North Dakota spokesman for the Sierra Club. "It's going to alter the whole feel of the area if this road goes through."

All the county's proposed routes are within 2 1/2 miles of Roosevelt's Elkhorn Ranch, said Theodore Roosevelt National Park Superintendent Valerie Naylor.

"We're very concerned about the soundscape and any potential visual intrusion and dust," Naylor said. "It would forever impair a very special place."

Asia

Musharraf given deadline to quit or be impeached

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—A top ruling party official on Saturday gave Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf a two-day deadline to quit or face impeachment proceedings.

Musharraf's allies insisted he was not stepping down and was prepared to fight impeachment charges. But pressure on the president mounted further after the ruling party drew up a draft of charges to support a potential impeachment.

"Musharraf is running out of time," Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi told reporters. "If he fails to decide to quit within the next two days, the impeachment process will take its course."

Qureshi is a member of the Pakistan People's Party, the dominant group in the ruling coalition which announced its intentions last week to impeach Musharraf.

The building momentum to throw the president out of office has injected even more uncertainty into an already volatile situation in Pakistan, a country whose stability the U.S. considers critical to success in the war on terror.

Musharraf dominated Pakistan for years after seizing power in a 1999 military coup, making the country a key strategic ally of the U.S. by supporting its fight against the Taliban and al-Qaida. But his popularity at home has been dwindling.

Musharraf

Many Pakistanis blame rising violence in their country on his alliance with the United States. Musharraf's popularity sunk to new lows in 2007 when he ousted judges and imposed emergency rule. Then his rivals came to power after February parliamentary elections, largely sidelining him.

The United States has said publicly the impeachment debate is an internal matter and Pakistan's army, which Musharraf formerly headed, has also remained neutral.

There is no precedent for impeaching a president in Pakistan's turbulent 61-year history.

Under the constitution, a president can be impeached for violating the constitution or "gross misconduct." Coalition officials have said Musharraf's removal of judges and imposition of emergency rule last year could be cause for impeachment.

Coalition officials said Saturday they have completed a draft of the impeachment charges but it still needs approval from the party leaders.

On Friday, allies and rivals of the president confirmed back-channel talks are under way to avoid an impeachment process that could further destabilize Pakistan.

Musharraf's supporters want protections for him if he steps down, while suggesting they could use the courts to challenge an impeachment.

Tariq Azim, a senior member of the main pro-Musharraf party, insisted Saturday the president won't quit.

AP

A Filipino child races during a sack race as they celebrate the feast day of Our Lady of the Assumption in Manila, Philippines on Saturday Aug. 16, 2008.

Southeast Asia flooding hits cyclone-weary Myanmar

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP)—Severe flooding triggered by torrential rains has struck areas of Myanmar still recovering from a cyclone that killed more than 84,000 people, a state-run newspaper said Saturday.

Flooding has also hit parts of Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand. In Laos, at least four people died from their injuries in landslides triggered by flooding after levels in the Mekong River reached record highs.

In Myanmar, the floods hit areas of Yangon and the Irrawaddy delta, where Cyclone Nargis left a swath of devastation early May, as well as other regions of the country, the Myanma Ahlin newspaper said. No casualties were reported.

Residents fled from their homes, schools were closed and rice fields submerged in regions ranging from Karen and Mon states in the southeast to Mandalay in central Myanmar.

The water quickly receded and damage to rice fields was not reported, the newspaper said.

In Laos, Foreign Ministry spokesman Yong Chanthalansy said Friday that four people died outside the capital, Vientiane, after being injured in landslides triggered by the flooding. The state news agency KPL said one of the dead was a child.

Speaking by telephone from Vientiane, Yong said that there were reports that the flooding was receding Friday after water levels in the Mekong had reached 44.8 feet, beating the previous record high of 40.61 feet in 1966.

The flooding also cut electricity in some parts of the old royal capital of Luang Prabang, a popular tourist destination, the Web site reported. It added that the main road between Vientiane and Luang Prabang had been cut off by a landslide.

30 Taliban fighters killed in Afghanistan clashes

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—Separate clashes in Afghanistan's south and east last week killed 30 Taliban fighters, officials said Sunday.

A group of Taliban insurgents attacked police checkpoints in Nad Ali district of southern Helmand province on Friday, fighting that killed 23 militants, the Interior Ministry said in a statement. Four police were wounded and 13 other militants were detained, it said.

Following the clash, the police abandoned the checkpoints, the statement said.

In the eastern Paktia province, meanwhile, Afghan and foreign troops clashed with uniformed insurgents on Thursday, killing seven militants, the Defense Ministry said in a statement.

Among those killed was a group commander, Mohammad Zaman, associated with the militant leader Jalaluddin Haqqani, the statement said. Haqqani is a prominent insurgent leader wanted by the U.S. military.

Southern Afghanistan is the center of a six-year-old Taliban-led insurgency in Afghanistan that is gaining strength and spreading to the east.

Insurgent attacks have jumped by 50 percent in the first half of 2008, according to data from the Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, a Kabul-based group that advises non-governmental organizations on security.

More than 3,200 people—mostly militants—have been killed in insurgency-related violence this year, according to an Associated Press count based on figures from Western and Afghan officials.

Indian police arrest 9 linked to serial blasts

AHMADABAD, India (AP)—Police have arrested the alleged mastermind of serial bombings in western India last month that killed 58 people and have linked him to a banned Islamic group, an official said Saturday.

Police also arrested eight other men who were described as members of the Students' Islamic Movement of India, a group that was banned in 2001 and has been blamed for a wave of bomb attacks across India in the last three years.

"We believe that the network of SIMI was behind the blasts," senior police official P.C. Pande told reporters in Ahmadabad, the capital of Gujarat state and the site of last month's bombings.

Pande said police arrested the alleged leader of the bomb plot, Mufti Abu Bashir, in the northern Indian city of Lucknow on Saturday. He declined to describe what evidence police had against Bashir and the other men.

"Today is a big day for the Gujarat police who have been able to crack the Ahmadabad blasts case," the Press Trust of India quoted him as saying.

Police nearly always blame bombings on Islamic militants who allegedly want to provoke violence between India's Hindu majority and Muslim minority, but officials rarely offer hard evidence implicating specific groups.

Earlier this month, an Indian court lifted the ban on SIMI, saying the government had been unable to supply any new evidence of illegal activities. The next day, the Supreme Court reversed the decision, saying the ban would stay in place until it could consider further evidence to be presented by the government within three weeks.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Indonesian train hits freight locomotive, kills 9

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Police and railway officials say at least nine people have died and dozens were injured when a slow-moving passenger train hit a parked freight locomotive on Indonesia's Sumatra island. Zakaria, a train company spokesman who goes by a single name, says the train's driver realized the trains were about to crash but was unable to stop. He says seven passengers and two railway employees died, while 27 were seriously hurt. He says investigators have started questioning railway officials to determine what went wrong. Local police chief Col. Syauqie Achmad says Saturday's accident occurred in the town of Bandarlampung, about 185 miles northwest of the capital, Jakarta.

Another journalist killed in the Philippines, 6th this year

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A radio and newspaper journalist was shot to death near his home in the eastern Philippines in the sixth fatal attack on a reporter in the country this year, police said Saturday. Ronaldo Julia was walking toward the Magarao town plaza close to his home late Friday when he was shot several times by an assailant, who escaped on a motorcycle driven by another man, police Chief Inspector Victor Azuela said. Julia, 41, was a reporter for DZGE radio and the *Weekly Informer* owned by his older brother, Mike Julia, in Magarao in Camarines Sur province, about 155 miles (250 kilometers) east of Manila. Azuela said the main suspect, who could not be found, had gotten into an argument with Julia at a wake two days earlier. It degenerated into a fight that prompted the suspect to leave and return with a knife threatening to kill Julia, he said. "This case is almost solved. We only need witnesses," Azuela said, adding that "people are afraid to talk." Julia's brother said he believes the killing was politically motivated since the suspect is related to the rival of town Mayor Nelson Julia, another brother.

South Korea may ease ban on revealing fetus gender

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—A group of South Korean lawmakers have introduced a proposal aimed at easing the country's ban on doctors telling parents the gender of unborn babies, a National Assembly aide said Saturday. South Korea established the ban in 1987 to try to prevent abortions of female fetuses in a country where many prefer sons due to a Confucian belief that males carry on family lines. However, the Constitutional Court ruled against the ban last month, saying South Korea has grown out of that preference for sons and the regulations restricts the basic rights of parents and doctors. On Wednesday, 14 lawmakers—headed by the ruling Grand National Party's Rep. Lee Ju-young—submitted a proposal that would allow doctors to tell parents genders of their unborn babies over 28 weeks old, said Kim Kwang-sup, an aide to Lee. The proposal would still ban doctors' revelations of sexes of unborn babies under 28 weeks old to prevent abortions of babies with genders parents do not want, Kim said. Kim said it is medically difficult to abort fetuses older than 28 weeks and there are health risks for mothers. Abortion is illegal in South Korea but is widely practiced.

World

Russian forces still entrenched in Georgia

IGOETI, Georgia (AP)—Russian forces built ramparts around tanks and posted sentries on a hill in central Georgia on Saturday, digging in despite Western pressure for Moscow to withdraw its forces under a cease-fire deal signed by Russian President Dmitry Medvedev.

The United States and France said it appeared Russia was defying the truce already. Russian troops still controlled two Georgian cities and the key east-west highway between them Saturday, cities well outside the breakaway provinces where earlier fighting was focused.

"From my point of view—and I am in contact with the French—the Russians are perhaps already not honoring their word," U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said.

AP

Three-year-old Konstantin holds a Georgian national flag during a rally in Berlin on Saturday Aug. 16, 2008. The demonstrators protested against Russia's armed confrontation with Georgia.

Russia's foreign minister, Sergey Lavrov, said Medvedev had signed the cease-fire deal and ordered its implementation, but would not withdraw troops until Moscow is satisfied that security measures allowed under the agreement are effective. He said Russia would strengthen its peacekeeping contingent in South Ossetia, the separatist Georgian region at the center of more than a week of warfare that sharply soured relations between Moscow and the West.

Asked how much time it would take, he responded: "As much as is needed."

President Bush warned Russia Saturday that it cannot lay claim to the two separatist regions in U.S.-backed Georgia even though their sympathies lie with Moscow. "There is no room for debate on this matter," the president, with Rice, told reporters at his Texas ranch.

Later Saturday, Georgia's Foreign Ministry accused Russian army units and separatist fighters in one of the regions, Abkhazia, of taking over 13 villages and the Inguri hydropower plant, shifting the border of the Black sea province toward the Inguri River.

Abkhaz officials could not immediately be reached for comment on the late-night claim, and there was no information on whether the seizure involved violence.

The villages and plant are in a U.N.-established buffer zone on Abkhazia's edge, and it appeared that the separatists were bolstering their control over the zone after Russian-backed fighters forced Georgians out of their last stronghold in Abkhazia earlier this week.

The tense peace pact in Georgia, a U.S. ally that has emerged as a proxy for conflict between an emboldened Russia and the West, calls for both Russian and Georgian forces to pull back to positions they held before fighting erupted Aug. 7 in the other breakaway province, South Ossetia in central Georgia.

But freshly dug positions of Russian armor in the town of Igoeti, about 30 miles west of the capital Tbilisi, showed that Russia was observing the truce at the pace and scope of its choosing.

Rice noted that the text of the cease-fire agreement, negotiated by French President Nicolas Sarkozy, the current leader of the European Union, outlined a very limited mandate only for Russian peacekeepers who were in Georgia at the time hostilities escalated. She said the agreement specifies that these initial peacekeepers can have limited patrols in a prescribed area within the conflict zone and would not be allowed to go into Georgian urban areas or tie up a cross-country highway.

East Europe tries to protect itself from Russia

WARSAW, Poland (AP)—Poland strikes a deal on a U.S. missile defense base. Ukraine tries to limit the Russian navy's movement in its waters. The Czech Republic's leader warns his nation is in danger of being sucked back into Moscow's orbit.

Russia's attack on Georgia has sparked fears across the young democracies of Eastern Europe that Moscow is once again hungry for conquest—and they are scrambling to protect themselves by tightening security alliances with Western powers.

On Friday, Moscow sent a new jolt through the region when a top Russian general was quoted as saying that the missile defense deal signed the previous day by Washington and Warsaw exposes Poland to an attack.

"Poland, by deploying (the system) is exposing itself to a strike—100 percent," Gen. Anatoly Nogovitsyn said, according to Interfax News Agency.

Around the region, memories are being revived of the darkest days of Soviet oppression.

In Prague, where Czechs on Wednesday will mark the 40th anniversary of the Soviet invasion that crushed a reform movement, Prime Minister Mirek Topolanek expressed fears of history repeating itself.

"The Russian tanks on the streets of Georgian towns remind us ... of the invasion in 1968," Topolanek wrote in Mlada Fronta Dnes daily, the country's biggest newspaper.

"But it is not just history. It is still, even now, a relevant question whether we will or will not belong to the sphere of Russian influence."

He appealed to his political opponents to support his unpopular plan to host a U.S. missile defense shield.

Since fighting broke out more than a week ago between Russia and Georgia, the crisis has dominated headlines and sparked pro-Georgia rallies across Eastern Europe.

Poland's President Lech Kaczynski and the leaders of four ex-Soviet republics journeyed together to Tbilisi last week to show solidarity with Georgia. At a demonstration there, Kaczynski declared that the Russians had again "shown the face that we have known for centuries."

Lawyers to US witness against Olmert: Stay home

JERUSALEM (AP)—Lawyers for an American businessman have recommended he refuse to testify again before an Israeli court in a corruption case against Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, according to a letter released Thursday.

Morris Talansky already gave direct testimony and was questioned at length by Olmert's attorneys. Talansky told the court he gave Olmert envelopes stuffed with tens of thousands of dollars before he became prime minister.

Olmert has not been charged but has announced he will resign because of several corruption investigations.

The letter from Talansky's American lawyers, Bradley Simon and Neal Sher, noted the Israeli investigation mirrors a probe in the United States, and by testifying further, Talansky could incriminate himself.

"We have advised him not to appear for further examination in Israel until ... the U.S. grand jury matter is resolved," read the letter, supplied to The Associated Press by Simon's office. Talansky's response was not immediately available.

Legal experts told Israeli media that all of the businessman's testimony so far remains admissible, even if Olmert's lawyers are unable to complete their questioning, set for Aug. 31 and Sept. 1.

Olmert is facing several corruption cases, none of them covering his time as prime minister. He has not been indicted and has denied all wrongdoing. Even so, Olmert announced on July 30 that he will turn in his resignation after his party, Kadima, chooses a new leader in primary elections next month.

Because of Israel's complex electoral system, Olmert could still remain in office until next spring.

Tropical storm leaves 4 dead in Haiti, DR

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Flooding from Tropical Storm Fay killed four people in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, and authorities warned Saturday that the storm could reach hurricane strength as it barrels toward Cuba.

Florida's Gov. Charlie Crist declared a state of emergency and said Fay threatened the state with a "major disaster." Forecasters said Fay could bring hurricane-force winds to the Florida Keys as soon as Monday.

The U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami said that on Saturday night the storm was located about 60 miles (100 kilometers) southwest of Guantanamo, Cuba. It was heading west at about 14 mph (22 kph), with maximum sustained winds of 45 mph (70 kph).

A man died Saturday in Haiti while trying to cross a river in Leogane, south of Port-au-Prince, said Marie Alta Jean-Baptiste, head of Haiti's civil protection department. No further information was immediately available.

Rice fields in the Artibonite Valley, Haiti's most fertile region, were flooded, according to reports from Radio Ginen. And Fay's heavy winds destroyed banana crops in Arcahaie, north of the capital, although it is unclear how many acres were affected, Jean-Baptiste said.

Haiti has struggled to cope with a food crisis that sparked deadly riots in April.

The capital's airport reopened Saturday afternoon, but heavy rains were still expected in the south.

In neighboring Dominican Republic, a 34-year-old woman drowned when a family tried to cross a swollen river in a car, civil defense agency director Luis Luna Paulino said. The bodies of her missing 13-year-old niece and 5-year-old nephew were found Saturday afternoon, but her husband swam to safety.

A tropical storm warning has been issued for the Cayman Islands, and a tropical storm watch remains in effect for the Bahamas and Jamaica.

Cuba's government said hurricane watches were in effect for the provinces of Villa Clara, Cinefuegos, Matanzas, Camaguey, Ciego de Avila and Sancti Spiritus. Fay's path was expected to take it over the southern coast of the eastern Cuba late Saturday or Sunday and over the island's west near Havana on Sunday night or Monday.

Tsvangirai says he'd accept Zimbabwe premiership

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP)—Zimbabwe's opposition chief would accept the prime minister's post and concede the presidency—and command of the military—to Robert Mugabe to settle a political crisis in his country, the Associated Press learned Saturday.

Morgan Tsvangirai outlined his proposal for resolving the contentious issue of who would lead any unity government in Zimbabwe in a speech Friday to regional Cabinet ministers gathered for the Southern African Development Community summit. The AP obtained a copy of the speech on Saturday, the day the summit opened.

Tsvangirai's proposal, which he said his Movement for Democratic Change presented during the deadlocked negotiations with Mugabe's ZANU-PF party, would mean a major curbing of the powers Mugabe has wielded since the country gained independence in 1980.

But it also would leave Tsvangirai working closely with a leader he has reviled as a brutal dictator. After months of attacks on opposition supporters blamed on soldiers and police, the prospect of Mugabe remaining commander in chief was worrisome to some.

Elphas Mukonoweshuro, Tsvangirai's foreign policy adviser, acknowledged in an interview Saturday there was "a possibility of abuse," but said regional leaders who were expected to endorse a deal could keep a check on Mugabe.

The opposition may have little choice. Top military leaders have said publicly they would not recognize Tsvangirai's authority.

"This whole process is about sharing power," Mukonoweshuro said, adding, "Mr. Mugabe will be head of state and Mr. Tsvangirai will be head of government with executive power."

South African President Thabo Mbeki, who has been mediating Zimbabwe's power-sharing talks, spent much of the past week in Zimbabwe trying to push Mugabe and Tsvangirai to strike a deal. The question of Mugabe's role has been a major sticking point, with the longtime president reportedly refusing to yield any power and his administration publicly mocking Tsvangirai's claim to have the mandate to lead Zimbabwe.

In his speech Friday, Tsvangirai said the two sides remain unable to agree on how powers would be divided between him and Mugabe. A South African Cabinet minister closely involved in the talks, Sydney Mufamadi, said Saturday that a deal was close but said it was unclear if a breakthrough would come during the summit.

Health & Fitness

At any age, it makes sense to keep yourself in balance

By BRITTNEY JOHNSON
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

A Bosu ball makes for challenging workouts: Users aim to maintain their balance as the body shifts to compensate for the ball's movement.

AP

There are times in your life when feeling a little off-balance may actually be a good thing. Take it from the experts.

Although there are some changes you can't avoid as you get older, including deterioration of your hearing, vision and coordination, research suggests that it's worth taking steps—even risking a few missteps—to slow the decline in your balance.

Loss of balance makes us vulnerable to falls, which can be dangerous at any age but is the fifth-leading cause of death for people 65 and older, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The CDC makes a number of recommendations to prevent falls, including exercising regularly to maintain muscle and getting enough Vitamin D and calcium to preserve bone strength.

But a growing number of physicians, physical therapists and personal trainers go further, advocating exercises designed to challenge the complex system of reflexes that governs our stability and spatial orientation.

And, as Roger Yasin, a personal trainer in Arlington, Va., puts it, it's smart for younger people to start doing these exercises.

Yasin said many of his clients are surprised to find out how their balance declines over time, and they often underestimate how important balance is to navigating the hazards in their daily lives, from escalators to uneven sidewalks and grassy hills.

"Many people don't think of balance when they think of personal training; they think of diet and weight loss, or they want to get ready for a wedding or reunion."

Whether you're preparing for an event or doing your regular workout routine, Yasin and others recommend including exercises that address your balance.

Doing so has the added advantage of helping you lose weight. "Since you are trying to stabilize your body, you're using multiple muscle groups and can burn so many more calories," he said.

Yasin said everyone should start by balancing on the floor with one foot, before progressing to challenging equipment.

The following are a few of the many products aimed at different levels of fitness and expertise. Consult your trainer or doctor before choosing one that's right for you.

--Balance pads look like thick gymnastics mats but feel much softer. The feeling of instability created by the pad's foam surface increases as the user puts more weight on it. It can be used for rehabilitation, exercise and coordination training. Performing lunges, push-ups or sit-ups on a balance pad improves overall strength and stability. By stacking two pads on top of one another, the user can create greater instability for a tougher workout.

- Bosu ball—The Bosu, whose name stands for "Both Sides Utilized," resembles half a ball, with one flat and one domed side; it can be used for cardio, balance-building workouts or yoga. Users can sit, stand or squat on the curved side and sit or try push-ups on the flat side, all while trying to maintain balance as the body shifts to compensate for the movement of the ball.

- Dyna-Disc—Yasin says the squishy surface of this circular, air-filled mat makes his clients feel as if they're stepping on a deflated football. People of all ages can sit, stand or lie on the disks to improve posture and balance in the lower body. The Dyna-Disc is made from the same material as a gym ball but is more stable since it can't roll away. It comes in different sizes suitable for a variety of exercises. Users can perform curls or other moves standing on the disk to strengthen core muscles. They can change the inflation level of the disk or stand with one under each foot to increase exercise difficulty.

- Bongo board—This skateboard-like board is the most difficult of these products to use. It's designed to improve coordination by challenging the user to keep the board stable over a rolling wheel. The Bongo board is for more-advanced users and can also be used for push-ups to strengthen core muscles.

Other products are being created for people whose balance has decreased, whether through age or illness, and are geared toward preventing falls:

- Insoles inspired by NASA technology that helps astronauts keep their balance in space use sensors to record information about a person's ability to balance. Erez Liebermann, a graduate student at the Harvard-MIT Division of Health Sciences and Technology, began working on the iShoe insole as a NASA intern; it could be available in 18 months and cost about $100, according to the division's Web site.

Another product in development is the vibrating insole, or "noise-enhanced sensory function." Its inventor, Jim Collins, says it is intended to help elderly people detect changes in their environment, increase sensitivity to their surroundings and improve their balance. Collins said the insole is beginning the process of winning approval from the Food and Drug Administration.

If you don't frequent the gym but would still like to avoid falls, Scott McCredie, author of "Balance: In Search of the Lost Sense," says you don't need gadgets to improve your stability or core strength.

"All you need to do is stand on one leg in various poses, and you can do that anywhere," McCredie said, whether "waiting for the bus or brushing your teeth in the bathroom."

Physical therapist Kristine Legters takes this low-tech approach by incorporating balance training into her clients' everyday lives.

"Standing on a pillow, walking on grass as opposed to concrete, or looking around and moving your head while walking as opposed to looking straight challenges and improves your balance," said Legters, who works in Pennsylvania.

The takeaway message is clear: To maintain your stability as you get older, you need to throw yourself off-balance once in a while.

Fighting obesity

By CATHERINE SAILLANT
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

BAKERSFIELD, Calif.—On a recent day, Maria Velasquez led 25 women in outdoor aerobics at a park in this city's rough southeast district, home to a large farmworker community.

Nearby, young children played noisily on well-clipped grass. Wiping sweat from her brow, Velasquez announced she'd lost 80 pounds and, with it, a high risk of diabetes.

Elena Marin, who picks grapes and lemons, said she came to Stiern Park three times a week and had lost 20 pounds, with 80 to go. Sonia Molinar, who has shed 15 pounds, said that two years ago she wouldn't go near the park, which was home to drug users, stray dogs and gang graffiti.

Then neighbors and community leaders banded together to clean it up. Now the women walk in the park five mornings a week. Molinar brings her daughters.

"You keep yourself healthy and you make friends," she said. "Everything is good."

Health advocates point to the park's transformation as a success in their new initiative to stem a growing epidemic of obesity in California's Central Valley.

The national obesity rate has risen for decades, increasing from 15 percent of the population in 1976 to 33 percent in 2004, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta.

In the Los Angeles metropolitan area, more than 58 percent of residents are obese or overweight, according to a CDC report. The rate is higher still in the farm-rich Central Valley, said organizers of the Central California Regional Obesity Prevention Program, despite an abundance of fresh produce."We supply the country with cheap food, but the benefit does not come back to us," said Edie Jessup of Fresno's Metro Ministry, a nonprofit working on the issue.

Nearly two-thirds of the people living in Merced, Madera, Fresno, Tulare, Kings and Kern counties are obese or overweight, according to the Central California program. More than a third of the region's fifth-, seventh- and ninth-graders have unhealthy weights, a major increase from a decade ago. Armed with statistics, public health directors in the six counties joined with community groups to try to turn the situation around.

Organizers of the Central California Regional program say that if communities are to succeed in reversing the trend, leaders need to look not only at what people eat but also at where they live.

Access to safe parks and recreation programs is critical, said Jennifer Lopez, a community worker who helped the Stiern Park group navigate City Hall.

Also key is making sure fresh produce is easy to buy in neighborhood markets. A recent University of California, Los Angeles study said that the highest obesity rates are in lower-income areas in which convenience stores and fast-food outlets predominate.

"If they don't have programming, parks and easy, convenient access to fresh foods, they will make unhealthy food choices because that's what is available," said Veva Islas-Hooker, director of the Central California program.

Overweight and obese adults are more likely to develop diabetes, heart disease and certain types of cancer.

As part of the Central California program, each county set up its own obesity prevention council, Islas-Hooker said.

In Fresno, for instance, zoning laws made it difficult to create a farmers market in the city's low-income southeast area. Community groups prompted the City Council to make changes, said Jessup of Metro Ministry. After three major supermarkets pulled out of the area, the community groups also began trying to lure small markets with fresh produce.

Fresno Unified School District appointed a physical education director, a position that did not previously exist.

In rural Tulare County, Earlimart and Pixley schools agreed to open play yards after hours. In Kings County, a Kettleman City school district opened school grounds as a community park. Several counties have petitioned the federal government to allow food stamps to be used at flea markets, where people can buy cilantro, chiles and other fresh produce, Islas-Hooker said.

Some people respond enthusiastically to the idea.

In southeast Fresno, Stephanie and Gustavo Gonzales, who have six young children, had just bought fruit juice at a convenience store near their home when they were asked if they would like to see a farmers market in their neighborhood.

"I'd buy bananas, strawberries, grapes and nectarines," Stephanie Gonzales said. "And avocados, chiles and tomatoes. It would be easier, and healthier, too."

But Anthony Curiel, 9, and Angel Ochoa, 7, emerged from the store minutes later with a super-sized soda and a large bag of Flamin' Hot Cheetos. Both were dubious about swapping their snack for something from a farmers market.

"I wouldn't go," Angel said.

"Unless they had Cheetos!" Anthony added.

Health advocates say many low-income Central Valley children don't have adult role models when it comes to healthful food and exercise.

That's why projects such as transforming Stiern Park are so important, said Lopez, the Bakersfield community activist. Once the neighborhood women became energized about cleaning up the park, they gained confidence to make other changes, she said.

They organized about 100 neighborhood volunteers and applied for a $10,000 grant from the Chamber of Commerce, then used it to put in a concrete walking path. Now they take their walks on that path.

Lydia Ortiz said vigorous exercise helped her lose 28 pounds -- and the need for the insulin, her doctor told her.

"I've never seen a doctor jump up and down," said the mother of two. "She was so happy."

Life & Style

Madonna: An unlikely inspiration for 50-plus set

By JOCELYN NOVECK
AP NATIONAL WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Sure, Madonna may have scandalized the Vatican and shocked nearly every parent in America at some point during her long and provocative career full of shrewd image transformations.

But as the Material Girl hits the half-century mark this weekend, she may be stepping into a role that even she, with all her marketing savvy, might not have dreamed up: poster child for the 50-and-fabulous set.

Who cares about those recent tabloid headlines linking her to the Yankees' A-Rod, or that tell-all book by her brother? Many women of a certain age look at Madonna and see a wonderfully fit, stylish, vigorous woman who's made a fortune based on smarts, talent and ambition—no "Blond Ambition" puns, please—and just keeps on going. Her latest world tour, "Sticky & Sweet," kicks off in Wales a week after her Aug. 16 birthday.

Talk about your New 50.

"I just think she's awesome," says Dale Lieberman, a 55-year-old mother of two grown daughters who works at a Marleton, N.J., dress shop and seemingly shares little with Madonna, save their age demographic. Yet Lieberman thinks Madonna is a great example of what 50 can be like these days.

"Here's a woman that's successful, takes care of herself, looks amazing—and she took the steps to get there. It doesn't happen unless you take charge. She's a great role model for many, many women."

And if Madonna has any qualms about reaching this milestone—she isn't speaking publicly about it—Lieberman wants to reassure her: It'll be just fine. In fact, better than fine.

"When I was in my 30s, 50 just seemed so ancient to me," says Lieberman. Now, she says, her kids are both out in the world. She exercises regularly for the first time in her life. She's weeded out the unsatisfying relationships in favor of the truly genuine ones, enjoys nature, and loves to travel with her husband (they're planning a trip to the Amazon next.) "Sometimes it's scary how happy and fulfilled I feel," says Lieberman.

That's good news not just for Madonna, but for all the others reaching 50 in 2008 - and some famous names pop up. Michael Jackson and Prince are two of the most discussed. But there's also Ellen DeGeneres, Sharon Stone, Christiane Amanpour. Alec Baldwin, Viggo Mortensen. Andie MacDowell, Jamie Lee Curtis, original "Sex and the City" columnist Candace Bushnell. Michelle Pfeiffer, Annette Bening, Prince Albert of Monaco. And, linking them together as in one of those "Six-Degrees-of-Kevin-Bacon" trivia games: Kevin Bacon.

Madonna's milestone should inspire men as well as women, says David Zinczenko, editor in chief of Men's Health magazine. "I was in high school when she hit it big," says Zinczenko, who's in his late 30s. "Now that her first young fans are in their 30s, we look at Madonna as sort of a harbinger of the future for us. And the future looks pretty good."

What it tells us, Zinczenko adds, "is that aging is not the inevitability that we might have assumed by watching our fathers, now in their 50s and 60s. Madonna is proof that exercising and eating right at an early age pays off."

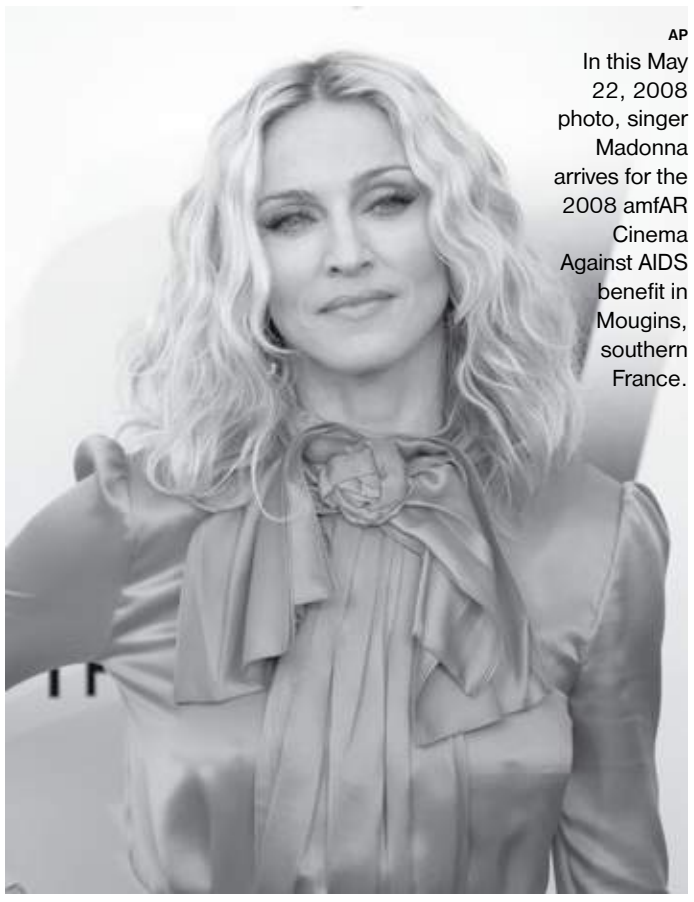
Of course, some could rightly point out that it's easier to stay fit when you can afford private trainers and servants. Or possibly a little nip and tuck? Madonna's face appears on the current cover of New York magazine as an example of the latest hot looks in plastic surgery, though she hasn't said whether she's gone under the knife or needle.

More power to her, says Lesley Jane Seymour, editor of More, a magazine for women over 40.

"So she's had some work—I'll take it," says Seymour. "I want to know who her doctor is! It's really hard to believe she's 50. She looks 40. And she just keeps going at it, living life and loving life."

To Seymour, Madonna's not only an example to women on how to grow older—she's a reflection of how, as a society, our perceptions of age have changed. Especially 50, which used to be seen as the beginning of a depressing decline, not a new chapter.

It starts with looking different. "Put a picture of a 50-year-old woman today next to one from my mother's generation," says Seymour, who recently passed the mark herself. "We look at least 10 to 15 years younger than they did." She attributes it to exercise, better skin care, sun protection, less smoking, and generally a different standard of health and well-being.



AP
In this May 22, 2008 photo, singer Madonna arrives for the 2008 amfAR Cinema Against AIDS benefit in Mougins, southern France.

"Also, 50 really is a new beginning for so many women," says Seymour, who notes that life expectancy rates show the average U.S. woman has another 30 years to live past the half-century mark. "Many have accomplished a number of their goals already. Their children are getting older. For the first time they can really think about themselves, and ask: What do I want from life?"

Of course, sometimes they can't get it. Women trying to return to the work force—or to progress within it—often find that advancing age is an obstacle. And in popular culture, age is still something we accept in our male icons much more easily than in our female ones. In movies, a recent exception was the "Sex and the City" film, which appealed to older women because of its portrayal of the late 40s and 50s as a still-sexy time of life.

Joanne Bamberger, a freelance writer and blogger in Washington, D.C., hasn't turned 50 yet—she has two whole months to go. She's ambivalent. But, she quips, "as the cliche goes, I guess it's better than the alternative."

"I just don't feel like what 50 should feel like," says Bamberger, who has an 8-year-old adopted daughter. "I remember my grandmother at 50. Her hair was completely white. My mother, too, was just at a very different place in her life than I am now."

Some days Bamberger asks herself, "How did I get to be this age?" But mostly she appreciates the perspective that being older has given her. She says she feels more settled personally now than in her 30s, when she was struggling with whether to have kids, but less settled professionally, having left a full-time career as a lawyer to write and care for her daughter.

Bamberger has always admired Madonna, especially for her shrewd ability to adapt her image. "She's done a remarkable job of marketing herself, and she's always been able to reinvent herself," says Bamberger.

So how does Madonna feel about the impending birthday? The pop star is not speaking publicly about it, says her longtime publicist, Liz Rosenberg. "I'm sure she's happy to be an inspiration to women and men of any age," Rosenberg wrote in an e-mail. But the birthday, she noted wryly, "is not quite the benchmark for her as it seems to be in the media, who have been talking about her 50th since she turned 40!"

Hollywood power broker Bernie Brillstein dead

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Bernie Brillstein, a Hollywood talent agent, manager, producer and studio head who over half a century guided the careers of "Saturday Night Live" comedians and helped package a slew of TV and movie hits, has died. He was 77.

Brillstein died of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease Thursday night at a Los Angeles hospital, according to information provided Friday by Brillstein Entertainment Partners.

Starting in the mailroom of the William Morris talent agency in 1956, Brillstein moved up to become a Hollywood power broker famous for putting together TV and movie deals, often starring talent he represented and with himself as executive producer.

Brillstein helped guide the careers of John Belushi and Muppets creator Jim Henson. He also helped bring "Saturday Night Live" and "The Sopranos" to television.

With partner Brad Grey, he founded the influential management and production company Brillstein-Grey Entertainment in 1991, which later was named Brillstein Entertainment Partners.

Among the successful shows he helped bring to TV were the long-running variety show "Hee Haw" and "Alf." He was executive producer on the hit movie "Ghostbusters."

Brash, sharp and rotundly rumpled, Brillstein exemplified the old-school stereotype of an agent rather than the slick, corporate "Jerry Maguire" operator.

"He had a soul that is often missing in the business, which has taken on much more of a corporate tone," said Jon Liebman, chief executive officer of Brillstein Entertainment Partners.

In his 1999 memoir, "Where Did I Go Right? - You're No One in Hollywood Unless Someone Wants You Dead,"

AP
In this file photo taken Oct. 26, 2006, veteran Hollywood manager, producer and power broker Bernie Brillstein, seen here, in Los Angeles, died of heart disease at a Los Angeles hospital at about 9 p.m. Thursday night, Aug. 7, 2008.

he recalled that early on at the William Morris Agency in New York he helped negotiate a Broadway musical deal for an actress - only to find out that she had been dead for four years.

"Now that's classic agenting," he recalled. "We got a dead person a $250-a-week raise. I knew I was in the right business."

Brillstein had a reputation for caring deeply for his clients. Being an agent, he told CNN in 1999, was much more than cutting deals for clients.

"You're a wife. You really are," he said. "You take care of everything and get them ready for the day."

"How do you take an actor or comedian or a writer and point them in the right direction and go through all that garbage unless you love it and love them and think they're talented and worth it?" he said. "It's an amazing experience."

Belushi's 1982 death from a drug overdose hurt Brillstein deeply. So did contentions in Bob Woodward's "Wired" that Belushi's handlers and associates ignored his drug use because he made money for them.

Belushi, Brillstein argued, was out of control and had refused to get treatment.

Born April 26, 1931, in New York, Brillstein was the nephew of successful radio comic Jack Pearl. He studied marketing and advertising in college before taking the mailroom job at William Morris, where he worked his way up the ranks, then left to join another agency and later formed his own management company.

One client in the 1970s was Lorne Michaels, who created "Saturday Night Live." Brillstein helped pitch the idea to NBC and credited Michaels with bringing him many clients from the show, including Belushi, Gilda Radner and Dan Aykroyd.

Brillstein shrewdly used his clients, including comedy writers, in TV shows and movies he helped package - despite the potential conflict of interest in placing a client in a project in which he had a financial interest.

He was listed as an executive producer on several Belushi movies, including "The Blues Brothers."

Brillstein became chief executive officer at Lorimar Film Entertainment in 1986, but lasted just two years because the studio was sold to Warner Bros.

"I put about 20 films in development at Lorimar and ended up making six lousy movies, two good movies and one great movie," he said in his autobiography. The good one was "Dangerous Liaisons," starring John Malkovich and Glenn Close.

Brillstein worked with Hollywood agent Michael Ovitz in the 1980s but the two had a famous falling-out. Years later, Brillstein would refer to Ovitz in his autobiography as a scorpion and "gangster."

Brillstein, who was married several times, is survived by his wife Carrie; sons Michael Brillstein, David Koskoff and Nick Koskoff; daughters Kate Brillstein and Leigh Brillstein; and a grandson, Alden.

'Tropic Thunder's' joke is on you

By LYNN SMITH
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

HOLLYWOOD—When Etan Cohen was working on the character of Kirk Lazarus, an actor played by Robert Downey Jr. in the upcoming comedy "Tropic Thunder," he asked himself: What is the most offensive thing an actor can do to get a part?

The answer was to have Lazarus, an Australian Method actor, try to become an black American character by undergoing a pigment procedure and then speaking street slang around the clock. "It seemed about the vilest thing you could do," Cohen said, laughing.

Cohen, a polite young man in a sport coat and yarmulke, didn't look much like one of the creative forces behind the summer's bloodiest, raunchiest and most politically incorrect comedy. As waiters served brunch in the posh Beverly Hills Four Seasons restaurant, the clear-eyed, Harvard-educated screenwriter tossed out Latin phrases like "reductio ad absurdum" (proving a proposition by showing its opposite to be false) alongside the dirtier words that fill the low-concept, high-profile film he co-wrote with Ben Stiller (who also directs and stars) and Justin Theroux.

He's aware that it's not always clear in parodies what the audience is laughing at. Early blogging about the film indicated some people won't find the Lazarus character funny at all. "It's important to say that what's being parodied is certainly not any actual black human being but the ideas in the actor's mind of what an African American would be," Cohen said. Then he added, "Which might be a fine line for people."

AP

"Tropic Thunder" co-writer Etan Cohen's writing met early criticism from fellow congregation members.

That's the sort of line, however, Cohen aspires to walk. A fan of films such as "The 40-Year-Old Virgin" and mentored by Mike Judge (on "Beavis and Butt-head," "King of the Hill" and "Idiocracy"), Cohen can be viewed as following filmmaker Judd Apatow into the R-rated comedy genre along with actor-writer Seth Rogen. Cohen and Rogen each have appeared on Variety's "screenwriters to watch" list.

Cohen was brought in to help write "Tropic Thunder" six years ago after Stiller and Theroux had been kicking around the concept for several years. The film follows a group of actors stranded in Vietnam while making a war movie and who inadvertently stumble into actual paramilitary violence when they run into drug traffickers. The film is "hard funny," according to Jack Black, who stars in the ensemble film with Stiller, Downey, Nick Nolte and Tom Cruise, among others.

"It's a movie that was not afraid to go for it in every possible way," Cohen said with pride.

He said he felt a particular sense of victory when reading Internet chats in which people who hadn't seen the film were objecting to it. In the movie, Brandon T. Jackson, as rapper turned actor Alpa Chino, complains to Lazarus that there was only one good role for a black actor and they gave it to the Aussie. On the Web, "People were saying there was one good role for an African American actor and they gave it to Robert Downey Jr. They were saying with a straight face exactly what we were saying in the movie. That felt great."

His other signature moment in the film, he said, was Stiller's character, an actor recognized and worshiped by the villagers for his role as Simple Jack, a mentally disabled character. "For many years, it's been interesting to me how Hollywood tends to romanticize (the mentally challenged)," Cohen said. "Instead of looking at it in a realistic way, they've sort of fetishized it. Like, `Oh, wouldn't it be great if we were all retarded? Wouldn't that be like the perfect world?' To me, one of the great moments is to be able to call it out. You have to, to understand why it's absurd."

He said his own grandfather, an academic, was raised by an adoptive father who was mentally challenged. "You never saw someone as angry as he was after seeing `Forrest Gump,'" Cohen said of his grandfather. "He said, `You think it's funny, being raised by a person like that?' He learned to read by reading the comics to his father."

Cohen was born in Israel, where his parents had wanted to settle but instead moved back and forth between there and the East Coast. He said he has been used to criticism since his first job, writing for "Beavis and Butt-head," drew complaints from the Modern Orthodox congregation he belonged to in Boston. "They'd say it's not kosher. `What are you doing? C'mon!' I always strongly disagreed. The point of the show was to hold up a mirror to the way people act and the attitudes they have. If you think it's glorifying people sitting around on a couch the way they do, you're probably missing the point," he said.

Cohen said he's drawn to material with a kernel of truth, social satire, social criticism or observation, but that ideal comedy lets him eat his cake and have it too. Take "Ow My Balls," for instance, a video inside the movie "Idiocracy." "You laughed at it because it was a guy getting kicked in the balls, and then you could laugh at it because it was a parody of the kinds of shows we all watched. I hope (`Tropic Thunder') works on that same level—multifaceted with something for everybody to enjoy," he said.

Despite his own scripted contributions, he said that perhaps his favorite part, indeed the one that's generating the most buzz among critics, is at the end of the movie when Tom Cruise, playing a bilious, profane, overweight and balding studio head, engages in a solo hip-hop dance. "That was Tom's idea," Cohen said. "That's why the guy's a movie star. It's an amazing rediscovery of how funny he is."

For people who find the film extremely crude, Cohen has some news. He's got more to come. Besides "Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa," he said he's writing a Sherlock Holmes film for Apatow to star Sacha Baron Cohen as Holmes and Will Ferrell as Watson. And his real goal, of course, is to direct.

"Just wait," he said.

NBC's likely hit its peak with Phelps leaving

NEW YORK (AP)—Can't Michael Phelps stay? Please? No amount of begging by NBC will make it happen. The Olympics swim meet ends soon after Phelps' bid for his eighth gold medal on NBC Saturday night, with another week of competition remaining.

Interest in the Olympics is nearly certain to wane, but NBC can already claim its own medal. The games averaged 30 million prime-time viewers over its first eight nights—"American Idol" numbers—and NBC Universal said it has earned more than $10 million since the games began from new advertisers eager to climb on board.

It's also the first real sign of that broadcast television can recover from its debilitating strike of last winter and produce an event that draws the nation together.

"Broadcast is not dead, despite reports to the contrary," said Brian Hughes, researcher for the ad buying firm Magna.

All because of one super swimmer.

Maybe not entirely, but NBC convinced Olympics officials to start races early so they could be aired live in prime-time in the eastern time zone, and built the network's battle plan around Phelps' bid for history. It worked out even better than expected, with two of Phelps' races having heart-stopping finishes.

Could Friday night have worked any better? NBC moved directly from showing a come-from-behind win by the leading U.S. beach volleyball team to Phelps' race. The live telecast heightened the suspense for East Coast viewers.

NBC was also able to show gymnastics, another marquee event, live. The one drawback to the one-two finish by Americans Nastia Liukin and Shawn Johnson was its 1 a.m. ending.

After a desultory summer of trumped-up dancing, singing and weight-loss competitions—maybe broadcast television's worst ever—the Olympics are like a feast to starving families, heightening its impact.

"This event shows the pipes work and that if you put on great programming that people want to watch, then they'll show up," Jeff Zucker, NBC Universal president & CEO, told CNBC Friday.

NBC says the Beijing games are on pace to be the most-watched Olympics ever. Between NBC and company-owned networks USA, MSNBC, CNBC, Oxygen and Telemundo, the airwaves are flooded with competition. NBCOlympics.com is streaming thousands more hours, too.

All of the activity has fueled interest, helping NBC in prime-time, said Gary Zenkel, president of NBC Olympics. Ironically, NBC's failure to keep video of the opening ceremony off the Web before it could be televised on 12-hour tape delay seemed to build excitement, resulting in a startling audience of 34 million people.

That theory won't be tested for competition, however. NBC doesn't stream events on the Web before they are shown on television. The second week is dominated by track & field, already likely to send many casual women viewers away. NBC's prime-time will also have few events live during the coming week, removing that element of suspense.

There's still a good chance NBC will be able to beat the 24.6 million average prime-time viewership of the Athens Games, and the 21.5 million in Sydney in 2000. That would be a real achievement when viewers have more alternatives every year.

During the first week, NBC has done little to upset its hosts.

Two of the biggest off-field stories—the stabbing of two Americans by a suicidal man and revelation that a cute girl singing during the opening ceremony was a lip-syncher—were covered during the day-time. But the stabbings were only briefly mentioned during prime-time and the lip-synching wasn't mentioned at all. Attendance problems at venues also hasn't drawn notice.

Except for a Tom Brokaw retrospective on opening night and Bob Costas' thorough interview with President Bush, the focus has been almost entirely on sport. Mary Carillo has kept her travelogues light. Mark Mullen's hard look at China's effort to groom Olympic stars was shown on the "Nightly News."

Costas has been respectful.

"Everyone of us who has visited here comes away with a deep admiration for the Chinese people—so much to admire here and so much to learn," he said one night.

NBC's meticulous pre-Olympic planning can actually have its weak points. There's little room for flexibility in prime-time, and NBC's view that only a small number of sports deserve that special platform sometimes makes the broadcasts repetitive.

Phelps' trips to the medal stand were also repetitive, but NBC will take them any day. Barring a major catastrophe during the final week, his success in Beijing will send NBC Universal executives home smiling.

Harry Potter fans are angry

By GEOFF BOUCHER
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

Call it "Harry Potter and the Revolt of the Muggles."

A day after Warner Bros. announced that it would be pulling the sixth "Potter" film off its November release schedule and instead releasing it next July to take advantage of skimpy competition in the summer, fans of the popular franchise were lighting up the Internet with their rage Friday. Thousands signed online petitions, others organized boycotts and protests and a vast number expressed their reaction with tears or clenched fists.

At Petitionspot.com, more than 12,000 fans had signed a demand that "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince," in postproduction in London, be returned to the long-promoted November date. Their posted comments made clear that Warner Bros. Chairman Alan Horn had, for a day at least, replaced Voldemort as the main villain in the hearts of "Potter" fans.

"They are doing this for no other reason than to make more money," 25-year-old Brooklyn resident Patrick Allen wrote in an e-mail to the Los Angeles Times. "This is ridiculous and I assure you that the millions of Harry Potter fans who have been looking forward to this release will not stand for it."

Thousands pay respects to comedy king Bernie Mac

CHICAGO (AP)—As Cedric the Entertainer scanned the crowd of more than 6,000 gathered on Chicago's South Side to remember Bernie Mac on Saturday, he cracked that the comedy king was "still the hottest ticket in town."

Fans, friends and fellow celebrities descended on the House of Hope megachurch to bid their farewells to a man who never forgot his humble Chicago roots. Hundreds of mourners had never even met Mac—or had met him only long enough to shake his hand, get an autograph or thank him for representing his neighborhood.

Mayor Richard Daley recalled that Mac was in his office recently, asking how he could help fight violent crime in the city.

"He wanted to help get children away from a life of crime and violence," Daley said during the service. "That's why he's the king of comedy. He never lost his soul in Chicago."

Mac died Aug. 9 at age 50 of what his publicist said were complications from pneumonia. He had been at Chicago's Northwestern Memorial Hospital since the middle of July.

Samuel L. Jackson, who co-stars with Mac in the upcoming movie "Soul Men," spoke at the church, saying he knew Mac "was having some health issues, but he always said to me every morning that he was always good."

Isaac Hayes, who died Sunday, also stars in the movie, and Hayes' music was played during the service.

AP

Actor Samuel L. Jackson arrives at a memorial service celebrating the life of comedian Bernie Mac on Saturday, Aug. 16, 2008 in Chicago.

Jackson observed that Mac didn't mind the loss of privacy that comes with fame.

"He never turned that kid down for an autograph," Jackson said. "He always had time to shake a hand. He was always that kid from Chicago who wanted to make everybody happy and everybody laugh."

The service included the reading of condolence letters from children; from Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama, an Illinois senator; and from Mac's beloved White Sox baseball team. Mac's comedy routines were played on large video screens with off-color words bleeped out.

Outside, traffic was tied up for blocks, vendors sold memorial T-shirts for $10, and Chicago waiter Timothy Strickland manned a makeshift shrine featuring photos, including Mac's 1971 eighth-grade basketball team picture. A sign read: "Thank you, Bernie, for showing that good people do come from Englewood."

Mac grew up on the South Side in the Woodlawn and Englewood neighborhoods.

His co-stars from the documentary "The Original Kings of Comedy"—Steve Harvey, D.L. Hughley and Cedric The Entertainer—took the stage together at the church.

Hughley recalled that he and the others eagerly awaited Mac's stage attire each night. He said: "Bernie would wear colors that crayons hadn't even thought of yet."

He said he met Mac in Detroit, but that Mac always wanted to talk about Chicago.

"All he talked about was his family and this city," Hughley said. "He loved this city."

Elvis fans ignore rain for graveside vigil

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—Mary Lou Martell put it off as long as she could. But she finally had to head to Memphis for an anniversary vigil at Elvis Presley's grave.

"It's my first Elvis Week. I'm a little ashamed to say that, but it is," Martell, 60, said as she took part in a candlelight procession to Presley's grave at Graceland, his former Memphis residence. "We watched it on the computer last year and I finally said, `I have to be part of that.'"

The procession, called the "Candlelight Vigil," drew several thousand Elvis fans who lined up in the street in front of Graceland for a single-file procession up a long, winding driveway to his grave in a small garden.

Fans weren't scared away by an intermittent drizzle during the vigil, which began at 9:30 p.m. EDT.

"We're doing fine," Martell said, peeping out from the hood of a plastic parka. "It's just for Elvis we stay out doing this."

The vigil, which runs into the early morning, is the highlight of a weeklong series of fan-club meetings, dances and Elvis-impersonator contests to commemorate the anniversary of his death. He died of heart disease and drug abuse at Graceland on Aug. 16, 1977. He was 42.

AP

In this Dec. 1968 file photo from the Ullstein archive, Elvis Presley holds his semi-acoustic guitar during a concert.

Martell of Dunkirk, N.Y., said she visits Graceland often but avoided Elvis Week in the past because of the crowds. She came early for her first graveside vigil, though, setting up a lawn chair at 9 a.m. at Graceland's front gates.

Many Elvis pilgrims return each year, and the graveside vigil draws visitors from around the world. But it's largely ignored by Memphis residents.

Jennifer Hobson, 29, of Memphis and a group of hometown friends formed a "Blue Hawaii" club to try to change that and sent out vigil invitations to their friends.

The group set up a small canvas canopy in the street in front of Graceland and decorated it with inflatable palm trees, blue lights and an Elvis bust sporting a blue lei.

"This is part of our city," Hobson said, "but when we come down here, we rarely see people we know. Y'all need to come out."

Hobson said the group had to leave some decorations at home because of the rain.

"I have a velvet Elvis, but because of the rain we couldn't bring out all of our good stuff," Hobson said.

Graceland supports a sprawling complex of souvenir shops, and fans waiting for the procession packed the stores pouring over Viva Las Vegas bobble head dolls for $19.99, Burning Love scented candles for $14.99, Jailhouse Rock T-shirts for $24.99 and hundreds of other Elvis-flavored gifts and do-dads.

DeGeneres, de Rossi reportedly wed in Calif.

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—There are reports that Ellen DeGeneres and Portia de Rossi have wed in what is perhaps the highest-profile gay marriage since California legalized the unions.

People and US Magazine say DeGeneres, 50, and de Rossi, 35, wed Saturday night in an intimate ceremony at their home, which is in Beverly Hills.

After the California Supreme Court ruled in May that homosexuals can marry, DeGeneres announced on her talk show that she and de Rossi would wed.

The couple have been together for nearly four years.

Man who hates engagement rings proposes annuity instead

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I despise wearing rings, which is a problem because I plan to become engaged. I'm OK with a plain wedding band, but baubles on appendages interfere with useful work and creativity, and they turn me off.

I have an expensive heirloom ring I would gladly give to my lady if she'd keep it in the safe deposit box where it belongs. I don't want to insure it, deal with it if she loses it, or know I caused her to be injured if a thug tried to steal it. If I give it to her, she'll want to wear it. She doesn't need an ornament to prove she's special or loved.

What can I use in lieu of an engagement ring? I'd rather give her an annuity or something useful. The thought of a $10,000 ring on a hand that belongs to a productive and intelligent working woman suggests self-indulgent exhibitionism.

I know I'm fighting an uphill battle, but my feelings are valid to me. I feel the same when I see rings in the workplace and socially. Why not just duct-tape a $1,000 bill to your forehead if you want to call attention to yourself? Any ideas?

PRACTICAL IN DENVER

DEAR PRACTICAL: Before you pop the question, be absolutely sure you and your lady have a meeting of the minds on this subject. Candidly, from the tone of your letter you come across as rigid, opinionated and controlling. While you are entitled to your biases, if you marry an "intelligent and productive working woman," she should be able to decide for herself what kind of jewelry is appropriate.

Also, I find it sad that you would rather keep an expensive heirloom ring hidden in a safety deposit box than have your lady enjoy it -- presuming, of course, that it's her taste and she WOULD enjoy wearing it. So if you're looking for ammunition in arguing this with your girlfriend, I'm sorry, but you have asked the wrong columnist.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I'm a divorcee, dating a man I'll call "Jack," who has been separated from his wife for three years. We've known each other two years and have been intimate for 11 months now.

Jack's daughter is being married in Mexico in two months. I have met both his adult children; they seem happy he is finally in a relationship. The problem is, Jack hasn't invited me to the wedding.

Jack attended my son's wedding with me last summer. It was 1,500 miles away. I had no problem taking him there.

Jack says he isn't divorced because he doesn't want to "pay the cost" of one -- although he does have a separation agreement. He's very tight with money. I don't plan to remarry, so the divorce thing isn't really an issue with me. I suspect he wants to avoid the stress of revealing our relationship to his former wife, who left him after 25 years of marriage.

I feel Jack is still living in the past, and I'm considering ending the relationship because of it. He's a wonderful, caring person, but he has a secretive side that I have a hard time dealing with. Help me to see the light.

TROUBLED IN TORONTO

DEAR TROUBLED: Allow me to share an insight. Secretive people usually have something to hide. You refer to Jack's wife as his "former" wife, but she's not. They are still married, and whether Jack's reason for maintaining the status quo is financial or emotional, he's not ready or willing to cut the strings.

It's time for a frank talk with your "wonderful, caring" lover because he has set a precedent for what you can expect in the future. And if this spells the end of the romance, I don't think you will have lost much.

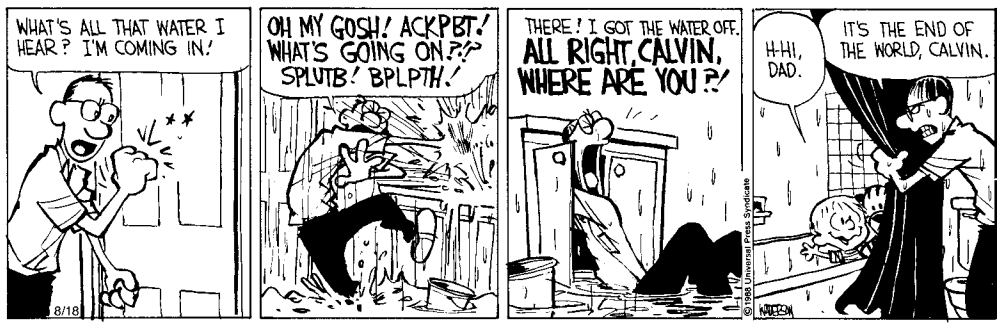
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


WHAT'S ALL THAT WATER I HEAR? I'M COMING IN!
OH MY GOSH! ACKPBT! WHAT'S GOING ON?! SPLUTB! BPLPTH!
THERE! I GOT THE WATER OFF. ALL RIGHT, CALVIN, WHERE ARE YOU?!
H-HI, DAD.
IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD, CALVIN.
8/18
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WATTERSON

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

GETTING HIM TO GO BACK-TO-SCHOOL SHOPPING SHOULDN'T BE THIS DIFFICULT.
8-18 BRIAN
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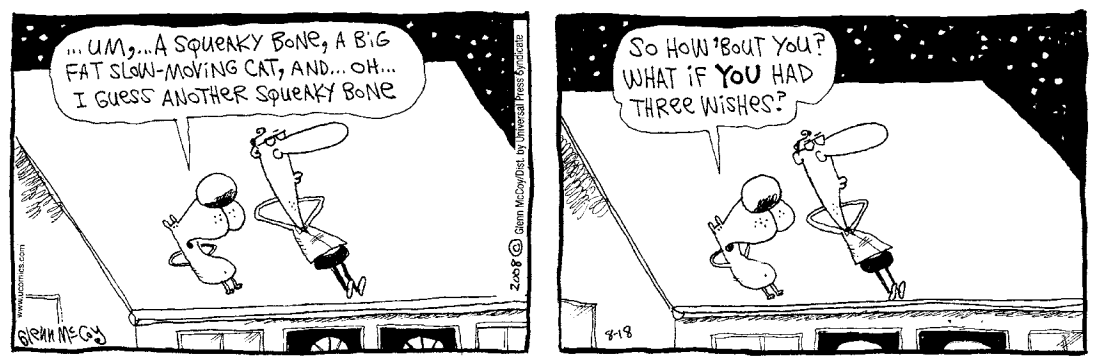
The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


...UM,...A SQUEAKY BONE, A BIG FAT SLOW-MOVING CAT, AND... OH... I GUESS ANOTHER SQUEAKY BONE
SO HOW 'BOUT YOU? WHAT IF YOU HAD THREE WISHES?
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www.uclicomics.com
GLENN MCCOY
8-18

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

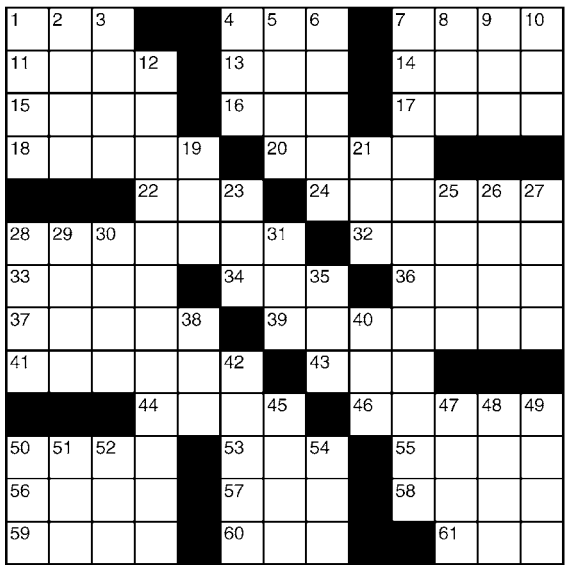
ACROSS
1 Long. crosser
4 Longing
7 "Sex and the —"
11 Touch
13 — tree (caught)
14 Vicinity
15 Illegal stimulant
16 Snapshot
17 Abound
18 Short publicity notice
20 Stylish
22 Man-mouse link
24 "Do unto — ..."
28 Clumsy
32 Binge
33 Fellow
34 Intimidate
36 Suggestion
37 Archaeologist's find
39 Mysteries
41 It may be covered in shadow
43 Feathery accessory
44 Legislations
46 Any of 150 in the Bible
50 Unaccompanied
53 Listening organ
55 Needle case
56 Be certain of
57 Night before
58 Angry
59 Evergreens
60 Foundation
61 Guys

DOWN
1 Easter entree
2 Cain's victim
3 Ballerina's frill
4 "Uh-huh"
5 Grand story
6 Cheesy chip
7 Slogans
8 Rage
9 Golf prop
10 Sweet potato
12 Decorative cushions
19 Underwear with underwire
21 "— Impossible"
23 Curved line
25 One of HOMES
26 Landlord's due
27 Collections
28 Farm measure
29 Curds' partner
30 Hardy cabbage
31 — and don'ts
35 "Charlotte's —"
38 U.S. spy org.
40 Police officer
42 Nerd
45 Rescue
47 Minuscule bit
48 Fishing-line attachment
49 Carriage
50 Firmament
51 Inseparable
52 Depressed
54 Crimson

Solution time: 24 mins.

■	O	P	T	E	D	■	S	T	A	S	H	■
T	R	I	A	G	E	■	H	U	B	C	A	P
Y	A	R	R	O	W	■	O	T	O	O	L	E
P	T	A	■	S	A	L	T	S	■	T	E	A
I	O	T	A	■	R	E	P	■	M	I	S	S
C	R	E	P	E	■	A	U	R	E	A	T	E
■	■	■	R	E	D	■	T	O	W	■	■	■
S	T	R	I	K	E	S	■	B	L	I	P	S
N	O	E	L	■	M	A	Y	■	S	N	O	W
A	R	N	■	H	I	T	U	P	■	H	U	E
G	R	A	V	E	S	■	C	E	T	E	R	A
S	I	M	I	L	E	■	C	L	A	R	E	T
■	D	E	A	L	S	■	A	F	T	E	R	■

Saturday's answer 8-18



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Malcolm-Jamal Warner, 38; Edward Norton, 39; Patrick Swayze, 56; Robert Redford, 71

Happy Birthday: Opportunities are all around you, so use your imagination and you can turn what you touch into gold. Love is in the stars and relationships and partnerships are laced with emotions. Open your heart and your mind and new ground will be broken as you venture down paths you probably would never have taken in the past. Your numbers are 9, 13, 21, 27, 35, 46

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Keep things to yourself until you are sure of what is actually going on. Changes at work or within your peer group may make you nervous but, the less instability you show, the less likely you are to be affected. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): A shift in attitude will bring great results. A love relationship will take a favorable turn that will help you make personal decisions you've been pondering over. An old friendship will blossom. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Don't take anything or anyone for granted. Just when you think you have everything running smoothly, someone will disrupt your plans. Don't get emotional—everything will depend on how calm and responsibly you act when chaos hits. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Don't back down or let fear override your desires. The chance to get what you want is close. Love is in the stars and your domestic scene is about to undergo a positive change that will alter your life. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Everything will depend on how responsibly you handle money and the people you deal with. There will be no room for insincerity or hiding facts. Any faltering on your part and someone will call your bluff and take over. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Expect an extraordinary change in the dynamics of your current relationship with someone. Groundbreaking advancement can be made if you stick to your beliefs and follow your heart. Greater popularity will be yours. Love is escalating. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Hold back until you are sure what's required of you. Someone you have to deal with will be erratic about what he or she expects or wants. An emotional problem will develop if you mix business with pleasure. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Plans for a romantic encounter should be underway. Look at a job opportunity that will give your resume a boost and consider it, even if it isn't exactly what you want to do. Avoid petty arguments. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Don't let someone down. Complete what you start and avoid raising suspicion or doubt regarding your true motives. Minor mishaps while traveling or an emotional meltdown are possible if you don't play by the rules. ✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): You can make a commitment to someone to ensure that he or she will be in your life forever. There is money to be made if you alter a couple of the variables in a deal you've been working on. Strike while the iron is hot. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Don't let turmoil in a relationship stop you from doing something that means a lot to you. When control is an issue, it's best to discuss exactly who is responsible for what before you get too far into the thick and thin of the partnership. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Take care of personal business quickly before anyone has a chance to become angry and upset. Don't let anyone bully you or cause you to act in haste. Pull in favors to help you build strength and give you the power to follow through. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are sensitive, caring and fair. You are engaging, entertaining and an opportunist. You are dedicated to your beliefs but adaptable when change is required.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	7		6			9		
	4			8	2		7	5
1		3	9			6		
	6					2		1
	2		8	1	4		5	
8		1					9	
		2			7	8		3
3	9		2	6			1	
		8			3		2	

Difficulty Level ★ 8/18

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

7	4	9	5	1	3	2	6	8
1	3	2	6	8	4	7	5	9
6	8	5	2	9	7	4	1	3
8	9	7	4	2	1	5	3	6
2	5	4	9	3	6	1	8	7
3	6	1	7	5	8	9	4	2
5	7	6	8	4	2	3	9	1
4	1	8	3	7	9	6	2	5
9	2	3	1	6	5	8	7	4

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 8/16

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

ELIZABETHAN SONNETS **Solution: 7 letters**

H	E	S	A	(R)	H	P	A	S	S	I	O	N	A	P
E	G	S	A	(E)	Y	T	I	V	I	T	A	E	R	C
L	I	E	A	(A)	G	A	G	D	R	T	R	O	T	L
L	D	R	L	(D)	N	N	O	A	U	U	G	N	I	A
I	T	I	O	A	I	I	D	R	T	R	A	M	F	S
V	O	E	V	L	R	I	A	C	E	G	E	E	I	S
E	N	S	E	E	T	L	U	S	E	R	E	P	C	I
R	E	E	P	I	S	R	S	L	I	N	E	O	I	C
G	F	O	O	C	T	I	E	C	G	M	T	R	A	A
L	E	N	H	S	O	G	K	L	O	Y	W	U	L	L
M	U	E	D	N	N	W	I	T	E	U	L	E	R	M
B	M	O	C	O	I	S	I	N	M	I	P	I	I	Y
E	O	I	S	T	H	O	D	U	N	O	B	L	E	V
M	P	C	T	E	N	I	S	E	C	L	E	V	E	R
E	S	Y	A	S	S	E	S	U	O	R	O	M	A	T

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Amorous, Artificial, Century, Classical, Clever, Couplet, Creativity, Elegant, Emotions, English, Epic, Essay, Europe, Feeling, Greville, Heart, Idea, Limerick, Lines, Love, Mood, Muse, Natural, Noble, Notes, Passion, Period, Phrase, Poem, Progression, Ralegh, Read, Scheme, Series, Sidney, Song, Soul, String, Structure, Tone, Tradition, View, Witty

Last Saturday's Answer: Remodel

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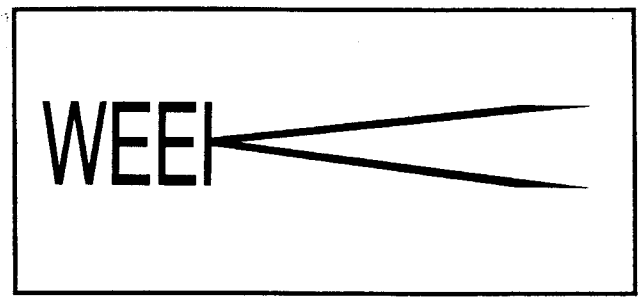

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Guard files sex harassment suit vs principa
2 hurt in Puerto Rico vehicular crash. PA
There is still hope for nonimm
all alien workers in the CNMI who are appealing to U.S. lawmakers to retain the provision in the federalization bills that would grant nonimmigrant status to long-term alien workers.
In her message, expected to be read during today's prayer vigil at the American Memorial Park's Amphitheater, Doromal urged alien workers to "stand strong" as she vowed to continue supporting them "until the fight is won."
See DOROMAL on Page 4
joins Micronesia si
OPINION METER
This week's poll:
With what you know of the CUC situation, do you support the adoption of new regulatio

235- NEWS

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Favre tosses TD pass in Jets debut

AP

New York Jets quarterback Brett Favre throws a pass against the Washington Redskins during the first quarter of a NFL pre-season football game Saturday night, Aug. 16, 2008 at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J.

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP)—Brett Favre proved he's a quick study. The New York Jets' new quarterback also showed he has plenty of zip remaining in that rocket right arm.

The three-time MVP was solid in his brief Jets debut after a week of cramming to learn his new playbook, throwing a 4-yard touchdown pass to Dustin Keller to cap his second series in a 13-10 loss to the Washington Redskins on Saturday night.

Just 10 days after being acquired from Green Bay, Favre finished 5-of-6 for 48 yards and the touchdown. He said his arm felt fatigued early in the week, but looked strong in his two series. He lasted 14 plays after coach Eric Mangini said he expected Favre to take 8-12 snaps.

"Nervous, excited," Favre said of how he felt in his debut. "Some feelings I haven't felt in a while, but I was excited."

He was replaced by backup Kellen Clemens with the Jets (1-1) leading 7-3.

Colt Brennan's 33-yard touchdown pass to Jason Goode with 1:09 remaining put the Redskins ahead 13-10. James Ihedigbo went for the interception and missed as Goode got behind him, caught the pass and rumbled into the end zone.

Brett Ratliff then led the Jets down to the Redskins 5 with an impressive drive, but Mike Nugent missed a 23-yard field goal attempt as time expired.

Favre retired in March and then decided he still wanted to play, leading to a bitter divorce with Green Bay. He said his arm felt tired Wednesday and had his throws limited in his final two practices leading up to the game, but showed no signs of weariness against the Redskins (3-0).

Favre, in his first game since losing to the Giants in the NFC championship in January, received a huge standing ovation from the half-filled Giants Stadium when he was introduced with the starting offense.

After another hearty welcome as he jogged onto the field for the game's first series, Favre got things started quickly. He zipped an 11-yard pass into Jerricho Cotchery's hands on his first play, and tossed a 10-yarder to Chris Baker two plays later.

The Jets converted a fourth-and-1 on a 3-yard run by Thomas Jones, but Favre was sacked two plays later by Marcus Washington and Cornelius Griffin. After Favre was short on a pass to Jones, the Jets were forced to punt.

New York came out running on its second possession, with Leon Washington gaining 7 yards on two carries. Favre then found Cotchery on a nice crossing route for a 19-yard gain. Brad Smith followed with a 12-yard gain and Washington ran for 4 yards to bring it to the Redskins 4 and set up the score.

Favre took the snap, looked to his left and found Keller in the end zone to give the Jets a 7-0 lead with 5:25 remaining in the first quarter. Favre clapped in celebration after the score and high-fived several of his new teammates, including the rookie tight end.

"It was a simple play," Favre said. "We had Keller and (Bubba) Franks on two quick outs. Keller had better leverage at the 5, Franks had a little trouble getting off the line. It was pretty simple."

Shaun Suisham kicked a 30-yard field goal 9 seconds into the second quarter, and added a 36-yarder 4:30 into the second half to make it 7-6.

Nugent kicked a 43-yarder with 9:08 remaining to make it 10-6 after missing from the same distance late in the third quarter.

Clemens, who was competing with Chad Pennington for the starting job before Favre arrived, finished 5-of-12 for 63 yards and was victimized by at least four dropped passes.

Redskins starter Jason Campbell was 4-of-10 for 28 yards, while Todd Collins went 11-of-15 for 72 yards.

Jackson hurts knee during Vikings' win over Ravens

BALTIMORE (AP)—Tarvaris Jackson left with a knee injury in the first quarter of Saturday night's preseason game against the Baltimore Ravens, ruining an otherwise productive night for the Vikings quarterback in Minnesota's 23-15 victory.

Jackson hurt his right knee on a 9-yard run, then stayed in for two more plays before leaving. He watched most of the second quarter from the sideline with his knee wrapped in ice.

Jackson finished 7-for-11 for 82 yards and a touchdown. He also ran twice for 22 yards before leaving during Minnesota's second series.

The focus for both teams was on the quarterbacks. Jackson shined in his brief appearance, but the manner in which he left was of great concern for the Vikings (1-1), given that the third-year quarterback missed four games with injuries last season.

Troy Smith, locked in a duel with Kyle Boller to earn the starting assignment, struggled in his first start of the preseason for Baltimore (1-1). The former Heisman Trophy winner went 3-for-5 for 25 yards and an interception in the first half, finishing with a horrid 33.3 quarterback rating. He did, however, gain 35 yards on three carries behind a makeshift offensive line.

"Getting out of the pocket and making plays is something we're going to be doing this year," Smith said.

Boller entered in the third quarter and went 8-for-12 for 40 yards. He also threw an interception, his third turnover in two games.

Top draft pick Joe Flacco played the final two drives.

Jackson opened the game with a 70-yard drive to put Minnesota up 7-0. After running for 13 yards on a third-and-11, he threw a 23-yard touchdown pass to Martin Nance, who deftly tapped both feet in the back corner of the end zone.

Smith answered with a touchdown drive of his own, but most of the credit belonged to rookie running back Ray Rice. Playing in place of injured Willis McGahee, Rice ran for 42 yards on Baltimore's second play from scrimmage and finished with a 6-yard TD run.

Minnesota then ran six plays before Jackson scrambled to his right. He was hit by linebacker Antwan Barnes in the leg, then struggled ahead before being taken down by Dawan Landry and Ray Lewis.

"We didn't stop them, and a lot of that came from Jackson scrambling," Ravens coach John Harbaugh said.

Jackson stayed in long enough to hand the ball off to Adrian Peterson and complete a 12-yard pass to Sidney Rice before collapsing near the Vikings bench.

Gus Frerotte completed the drive, which produced the first of three field goals by Steven Hauschka.

Frerotte went 4-for-9 for 32 yards and threw a 5-yard touchdown pass to Robert Ferguson for a 17-7 lead.

Baltimore played without injured defensive starters Chris McAlister, Samari Rolle, Ed Reed and Kelly Gregg. But the Ravens got a touchdown from defensive back Derrick Martin, who picked off a pass by rookie John David Booty and returned it 22 yards to make it 23-15 with 12:11 left.

Carl Pettersson holds lead at Wyndham Championships

GREENSBORO, N.C. (AP)—The pressure to follow a record round with an even better number got to Carl Pettersson. Just not enough to cost him the lead.

Pettersson topped the Sedgefield Country Club leaderboard for the second straight day, shooting a 4-under 66 on Saturday to follow his tournament-record 61 and take a two-stroke lead after three rounds of the Wyndham Championship.

A local fan favorite who went to high school in Greensboro and is on the tournament's board of directors, Pettersson had a 19-under 191 total. The Swede is in position to claim his third career PGA Tour victory and first since 2006—even if he admitted that he occasionally tried too hard to outdo his second-round performance.

"Unless you get off to a really hot start, you kind of feel like you're behind the 8-ball," Pettersson said. "Sometimes you can start pressing too much, and in golf, pressing's not really good to do. You've got to let the birdies happen, let the putts go in. You can't really force them in. ... I think it's easy to get agitated the day after you made everything."

Scott McCarron was second. He holed a 45-yard sand shot on 18 for a 64. Briny Baird (62), Garrett Willis (69) and Kevin Streelman (67) were six strokes back.

Leading after 54 holes in Greensboro usually leads to a victory. From 1999-2006, every champion of this tournament had held or shared the third-round lead, a string broken last year when eventual PGA Tour rookie of the year Brandt Snedeker erased Jeff Overton's three-stroke advantage across town at Forest Oaks.

Then again, with low scores commonplace all weekend at the original Donald Ross-designed course, no lead is safe.

"Where we are, and where Carl is, even if Carl stumbles and falls back, it's still going to take a low number (Sunday) for somebody to win the tournament," Baird said. "The golf course is set up for low numbers."

This time, Pettersson had three birdies and an eagle, opening with four pars before his 3 on the 529-yard, par-5 fifth. He landed his approach 4 feet from the pin and sank that putt to eagle the hole for the second time in three days.

But he also bogeyed the course's easiest hole—the par-5 15th—for the second day in a row. He sent his approach shot into the primary rough, recovered, then lipped out consecutive 4-foot putts to slip to 18 under.

"I had so many chances today, but I just didn't convert the putts like I did yesterday," Pettersson said. "I've played that hole terrible all week, so I'll just keep the trend going."

He regained that stroke two holes later with a birdie on the par-4 17th after landing his fairway shot 4 feet from the flagstick. On the 18th, he left his 20-foot birdie putt 4 inches short and tapped in for par.

McCarron, who entered trailing Pettersson by four strokes, was bogey-free and had three consecutive birdies on Nos. 2-4 to move to 14 under. He said he didn't peek at the leaderboard until midway through his round, when he remained four strokes back.

"At that point, I got a sense that Carl was still putting the pedal to the metal," McCarron said. "So I had to make some more birdies. ... I got back in the hunt."

He finished strong with birdies on two of his final three holes—the par-3 16th, and then his spectacular, round-closing shot from a downhill lie in the bunker.

"I told my caddie if I made this, I would get in the bunker and do a snow angel," McCarron said. "I chickened out."

Baird had the best round of the day, a 62 that included seven birdies on the back nine and birdies on his final four holes. He began the round 10 strokes off the lead but could only hope that Pettersson would somehow self-destruct on his hometown course.

"I shot 28 on the back nine. He does something like that, the tournament is out of reach," Baird said. "If he can be friendly and make a bunch of pars, it would leave a lot of people back in it."

US men's hoops hammers Spain

BEIJING (AP)—Four down, four to go. The U.S. men's Olympic team is halfway back to the top of the basketball world.

And not even the world champions—on paper anyway—could give the Americans a game.

Unleashing a lethal 3-point barrage for the first time in Beijing, the Americans turned the marquee matchup of the preliminary round into another romp, beating Spain 119-82 Saturday night to clinch the top seed in their group.

LeBron James scored 18 points for the United States (4-0), which hit seven of its first 10 attempts from behind the arc after making only 29 percent in its first three games. They finished at 48 percent (12-of-25), an almost unfair total for a team with unmatched athleticism.

cans. They hope to get another crack next Sunday on the final day of the Beijing Games.

"It was something for us personally to say, 'Where do we measure up with the champions?"' Kobe Bryant said. "And this was a big game for us."

And how did the U.S. measure up?

"Pretty damn well," Bryant said.

The Americans need to play eight games to win the gold medal. They can lose Monday's now-meaningless game to close pool play against Germany, but have to be perfect for the final three starting Wednesday.

They look up for the task.

Ignoring early foul trouble for Bryant and Anthony, the Americans turned to top reserves Wade and Chris Paul to ignite an early 13-3 spurt that gave them a 13-point lead late in the first quarter, and Spain never made much of a dent in the

night session, the Olympic basketball arena had an energy that had been missing since the Americans' victory against the Chinese on opening night.

James was already walking toward the Spanish team's line of players for the pregame handshakes and exchange of gifts before Spain's national anthem was even finished. Realizing the opponents weren't ready, he stopped at midcourt and tried to get his teammates to do the same, but some walked right past.

That made it clear: James and his teammates were ready to go.

"They wanted to make a statement in this game, playing against us, and they did," Gasol said. "They sent a message to everybody in the tournament. They didn't do it before, and now everybody knows that they're for real, and they're very serious about this."

James opened the game with a

AP

USA's LeBron James goes up for a dunk against Spain in a men's preliminary basketball game at the Beijing 2008 Olympics in Beijing, Saturday, Aug. 16, 2008.

"We shot 45 percent from the 3 and we shot close to 80 from the free throw line, so that's a plus if we can do that," James said. "We know we're going to defend, we know we're going to get fast break points, but when we can shoot the ball from the outside like that and shoot free throws well it's going to be tough to beat us."

Every U.S. player scored—even Jason Kidd for the first time in Beijing—as the Americans turned the matchup of unbeatens into their easiest victory yet. Dwyane Wade and Carmelo Anthony each finished with 16 points.

The Americans will face the No. 4 seed from Group A, either Australia or Croatia, in the quarterfinals. They also wouldn't have to face Lithuania, the other remaining unbeaten and top seed from the other side, or Spain again until the gold-medal game.

Felipe Reyes scored 19 points for Spain (3-1), the 2006 world champion. The Spanish have won eight of their last 10 Olympic games, but the two losses were against the Americ-

deficit even while shooting 58 percent in the first half.

The Spanish tried to slow the Americans with a zone defense, but crisp ball movement set up open 3-pointers—and the U.S. players finally made them. James and Bryant hit from behind the arc on consecutive possessions after Spain trimmed the U.S. lead to eight midway through the second quarter, and Deron Williams nailed another during a 9-0 burst that made it a 20-point game late in the half.

The Americans led 61-45 at the break, then Anthony hit two more 3s during an 11-3 surge to open the second half that made it 72-48 when Kidd sank a layup on a pass from James—his first shot attempt in Beijing.

Kidd joked the shot ruined his whole Olympic experience.

"My man gave me the ball I had to take the layup," he said, "even though I didn't want to."

With the packed crowd still buzzing from China's thrilling victory against Germany earlier in the

steal and layup and added seven more points in the first period. After needing 11/2 quarters to start pulling away from their first three opponents, the Americans needed barely 8 minutes to take a double-digit lead in this one.

And that was with Bryant missing most of the period in foul trouble. He flattened Pau Gasol, his Los Angeles Lakers teammate, while trying to run through a pick 2 minutes into the game, then collected an offensive foul with 5:50 remaining.

No matter. U.S. coach Mike Krzyzewski just sent in Wade, who came in averaging 18.3 points, trailing only Argentina's Manu Ginobili for the tournament lead. His alley-oop dunk on a pass from James put the Americans at the 90-point mark with still 9 minutes left in the game.

It wasn't long after that before they blew past the 101 points they rang up against China, their previous high here. Paul scored 14 points, and Bryant and Williams each had 11.

Gasol finished with 13 points for Spain, which closes pool play against winless Angola.

Rodriguez gets record 47th save as Angels hang on to beat Indians

CLEVELAND (AP)—Los Angeles closer Francisco Rodriguez tied his team record of 47 saves as the Angels hung on to beat the Cleveland Indians 4-3 in the American League on Saturday.

Starting pitcher John Lackey earned his fourth straight win as the Angels capitalized on four Cleveland errors.

Rodriguez yielded a single to open the ninth, then got three quick outs—two on strikeouts—to match his saves mark set in 2006. He narrowly escaped a second straight blown save when Ryan Garko lined a pitch inches foul with a runner on second and two outs before striking out.

Rangers 3, Rays 0

In Arlington, Texas, a homer on the first pitch set Texas away for a shutout victory over Tampa Bay.

The Rangers snapped a four-game losing streak while nipping the Rays' three-game run of wins and preventing the AL East leader from extending its divisional advantage.

White Sox 2, Athletics 1

In Oakland, California, Chicago maintained its share of the AL Central lead with a narrow win over Oakland.

John Danks pitched six effective innings to win his fifth straight decision on the road. He extended his dominance of the A's, allowing one run.

Twins 7, Mariners 6

In Minneapolis, Minnesota snuck home in the bottom of the ninth to beat Seattle and stay level with Chicago atop the AL Central.

Joe Mauer homered and scored three times, sliding home in the ninth inning on a sacrifice fly to notch the winning run.

Blue Jays 4, Red Sox 1

In Boston, the home team's four-game winning streak came to an end at the hands of Roy Halladay and Toronto.

Blue Jays starter Halladay pitched his majors-leading eighth complete game, limiting the Red Sox to six singles before a homer leading off the ninth.

Yankees 3, Royals 2, 13 innings

In New York, Brett Gardner singled home the winning run with two outs in the 13th inning as New York pipped Kansas City.

Gardner slapped a single past the third baseman and Robinson Cano sprinted home from second as the throw to the plate was wide.

Tigers 5, Orioles 3

In Detroit, Miguel Cabrera and Carlos Guillen hit home runs in the fourth inning to set up Detroit's win over Baltimore.

Detroit starter Justin Verlander got his first victory in almost a month, allowing only two unearned runs in six innings while striking out six.

Marlins 3, Orioles 1

In Miami, Hanley Ramirez hit a leadoff homer and Cody Ross singled in the go-ahead run to help the Florida Marlins snap the Chicago Cubs' nine-game road winning streak.

Anibal Sanchez (2-2) pitched 5 1-3 innings for the Marlins, who avoided tying a season-high four-game losing streak. Kevin Gregg, who allowed a game-winning home run Friday night, pitched a scoreless ninth for his 27th save in 33 chances.

Mets 7, Pirates 4

In Pittsburgh, Pedro Martinez pitched seven innings for the first time this season, and Jose Reyes and Ramon Castro homered to lead surging New York past Pittsburgh.

Reyes and Castro each finished with two hits and two RBIs for the NL East leaders, who have won five straight and nine of 12. New York is a season-best 11 games over .500.

Diamondbacks 11, Astros 5

In Houston, Miguel Montero and Chris Young hit grand slams—the first time Arizona has hit two in one game—and the Diamondbacks beat Houston.

Montero and Young hit the first slams of their careers, both connecting off Brandon Backe. Montero also had a solo homer and a double, driving in a career-high five runs as the Diamondbacks won for the fifth time in six games.

Cardinals 9, Reds 3

In Cincinnati, Albert Pujols hit a pair of solo home runs, and St. Louis matched its season high with four homers in all during a victory over Cincinnati that extended its winning streak to four games.

Skip Schumaker started the outburst with a three-run shot off struggling Aaron Harang (3-13), hit hard in both starts since coming off the disabled list. Ryan Ludwick had a two-run homer, and Pujols hit the first of his two off Harang as well.

Braves 11, Giants 5

In Atlanta, Mike Hampton gave up two runs in six innings and Atlanta beat San Francisco to end a five-game losing streak.

Hampton gave the Braves' rotation a lift on the day 300-game winner Tom Glavine confirmed he'll miss the rest of the season with an elbow injury. John Smoltz and Tim Hudson have already had season-ending operations.

Padres 8, Phillies 3

In San Diego, Chad Reineke pitched five innings and got his first hit and RBI to win his major league debut in San Diego's win over Philadelphia.

Brian Giles drove in four runs for the first time this season to help Reineke survive after allowing two runs in a shaky first inning.

Brewers 4, Dodgers 3, 10 innings

In Los Angeles, J.J. Hardy had a run-scoring single with two outs in the 10th inning to make up for a costly error in the ninth and give the Brewers a victory over the Dodgers.

Hardy hit a two-run homer in the eighth to give the Brewers a 3-2 lead, made a fielding error in the ninth that led to the Dodgers' tying run, then hit a go-ahead single to right field off Jonathon Broxton (3-4) after Ray Durham walked with two outs and stole second.

Rockies 13, Nationals 6

In Washington, Troy Tulowitzki drove in three runs and Colorado scored six times in the fifth inning to extend Washington's losing streak to nine games.

Garrett Atkins, Brad Hawpe and Ian Stewart had two RBIs apiece for the Rockies, who broke open a 5-2 game in the fifth. The first eight hitters reached base safely, Colorado drew four walks and starter Livan Hernandez (1-1) helped himself with a run-scoring double.

PHELPS

From Page 28

also yelled and slapped Phelps in the chest.

Spitz's iconic performance was surpassed by a swimmer fitting of this generation: a 23-year-old from Baltimore who loves hip-hop music, texting with his buddies and wearing his cap backward.

"I don't even know what to feel right now," Phelps said. "There's so much emotion going through my head and so much excitement. I kind of just want to see my mom."

Debbie Phelps was sitting in the stands at the Water Cube, tears streaming down her cheeks, her two daughters by her side. After getting his gold, Phelps quickly found his family, climbing through a horde of photographers to give all three a kiss.

Mom put her arm around his neck and gave him a little extra hug.

Her son sure earned it.

"The Beijing Olympics has witnessed the greatest Olympian of all time—Michael Phelps of the USA," the announcer said as Phelps posed with his teammates.

The Americans still had to wait a couple of tantalizing minutes for the official results to be posted. Finally, it flashed on the board.

World record.

Gold medal No. 8.

"Nothing is impossible," Phelps said. "With so many people saying it couldn't be done, all it takes is an imagination, and that's something I learned and something that helped me."

Phelps, who won three relays in Beijing along with five individual races, gave a shout-out to all his teammates for helping him take down Spitz.

"Without the help of my teammates this isn't possible," he said. "I was able to be a part of three relays and we were able to put up a solid team effort and we came together as one unit.

"For the three Olympics I've been a part of, this is by far the closest men's team that we've ever had. I didn't know everybody coming into this Olympics, but I feel going out I know every single person very well. The team that we had is the difference."

Phelps set seven world records and one Olympic record, doing a personal best time in every event.

"It can't be described. We'll never, ever see it again," said Australian distance king Grant Hackett, who came up short in his bid to win a third straight 1,500 freestyle title.

Beforehand, Hackett figured Phelps was likely to win six golds, just as he did in Athens four years ago when the first attempt to beat Spitz's record came up just short.

"Everything lined up for him incredibly," Hackett said. "He's a nice guy, a good bloke, and the last few years I've never seen him change."

Back in Baltimore, some 10,000 fans hung around after an NFL preseason game to watch the relay on the stadium's big screen.

"I think he's going to be a legend forever," Ravens fan Ann Williams said.

Phelps won some races by ridiculously large margins, others with the closest of finishes—most memorably, his seventh gold by one-hundredth of a second over Serbia's Milorad Cavic in the 100 fly. Along the way, he became the winningest Olympian ever and left China with 14 career golds—five more than anyone else with at least one more Olympics to go.

"It's been nothing but an upwards roller-coaster and it's been nothing but fun," Phelps said.

Ditto for Dara Torres, who capped her improbable comeback with two more silver medals, missing gold by one hundredth of a second in the 50 freestyle.

The 41-year-old Torres, a five-time Olympian and the oldest American swimmer ever, also anchored the American women to a runner-up finish in the 400 medley relay. She got silver in all three of her races in Beijing, giving her 12 medals in a remarkable career that began at the 1984 Los Angeles Games—a year before Phelps was even born.

Surely this is the end.

Then again, never count Torres out—she'll only be 45 for the London Games.

"I go home extremely thrilled," said Torres, who also made sure to mention her ailing coach.

Michael Lohberg is battling a rare, potentially fatal blood disease and couldn't travel to Beijing.

"I wouldn't be here without Michael," Torres said.

Germany's Britta Steffen nipped Torres at the wall to complete a sweep of the women's sprint events in Beijing. The middle-aged American smiled, her head dropping back, when she saw a time of 24.07—just behind Steffen's winning effort of 24.06. The German added to her gold in the 100 free.

NMC

From Page 28

fourth quarter.

PTI tried to regain control of the match in the fourth period behind Kelvin Fitial and Edsel Mendoza, but faltered as it missed important free throws and committed costly turnovers in the closing seconds of the game.

After trailing by as much as 15 points in the fourth quarter 75-60, Fitial and Mendoza moved PTI within four, 79-83, with 59.5 seconds remaining on the game.

PTI muffed its chances to move closer when the ball slipped on Mendoza's hands in an inbound play.

The next two plays for PTI saw Mendoza and Fitial making trips to the free throw line. But they only went 2-for-4 from the foul line, while Villacrusis handed a perfect inbound pass to Manibusan, who had an easy undergoal stab to give NMC an 85-82 lead.

With 22.3 left in the game, PTI inbounded the ball, but Tumaquip caught Bruce Berline's pass to Mendoza in the midcourt, setting up Villacrusis for an uncontested layup.

Villacrusis finished with 23 points and was the second leading scorer for NMC. Mark Wallace paced NMC with 33 markers.

Mendoza led PTI with 20 points, while Fitial chipped in 19.

In the first game, defending champion Autonomous cruised to a 91-56 triumph over the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

Bobby Coldeen feasted on CPA's defense, or the lack of it, exploding for 40 points. Jun Aaron hit five triples and scored 20, while Tim Wesley contributed 18.

Francis Choay topscored for CPA with 17.

CPA kept Autonomous within striking distance in the first period with the former behind by only seven, 13-20.

But Coldeen and Aaron began trading baskets from downtown in the second and third periods to break the game widen open and lift Autonomous to an easy win.

First Game

Autonomous 91 – Coldeen 40, Aaron 20, Wesley 18, Everly 7, Kapileo 2, Rasa 2.

CPA 56 – Choay 17, Sablan 14, Wenty 11, Smith 9, Camacho 5.

Scoring by quarters: 20-13, 35-26, 62-41, 91-56

Referees: Arnold Mesa, Erick Artillaga.

Second Game

NMC 87 – Wallace 33, Villacrusis 23, Tumaquip 14, Diaz 6, Manibusan 6, Guerrero 4.

PTI 82 – Mendoza 20, Fitial 19, Renguul 18, Esdrelon 16, Berline 12.

Scoring by quarters: 18-22, 47-49, 71-58, 87-82

Referees: Mike White, Gilbert Espinosa.

EARLY

From Page 28

season. Bill Babauta is now based in Guam, studying at the University of Guam, while Keoni Chariton, Jerome Norita, and Steven Tenorio are over the age limit.

Jericho Cruz, last season's regular season and finals MVP, will be back to lead the Junior Nationals' bid for back-to-back titles and will be joined by Jayvan Tarkong, Allen Moses, Marvin Rabauliman, and newcomers, Joseph White, and Jose Castro. John Villagomez and Heartim Williams, who are alternates on the Junior Nationals squad will also play in the Rotary caging.

The Junior Nationals will be using the games in the Rotary caging to prepare for the Oceania 19-and-under tournament on Guam next month.

"We are using the Rotary as a tune-up for the Guam games. In the Rotary, players are instructed to execute our plays both on offense and defense. The possibility of getting injured during the tournament is there, so they are told to be careful, but they still need to play with the same intensity that we expect from them," Aguon said.

Like the Junior Nationals, the Sonics of coach Jesse Tudela will also be without their gunners from last year's lineup. John Lim, who shared the regular season MVP honors with Cruz last season, Jason Bahillo and Lerio Pagarao are over the age limit.

Left to lead the Sonics' bid to take the elusive championship trophy is Manuel Ajoste, who will be joined by several players from the Junior Sonics squad.

Games in the Rotary caging will be played from Monday to Thursday with only one game set for each playing day.

Tomorrow, sister teams G-Rollers I and II will collide at 5:30pm, while the G-Stars will square off with the Sixers on Wednesday. The Sixers finished third last year, beating the G-Rollers I in the consolation match, 85-84.

This Thursday, Capital Hill will debut against the Suns.

This year's Rotary caging will have a double round-robin format in the regular season with the top four teams advancing to the semifinals.

MICHAEL

From Page 28

When asked how he felt, for once this week, he couldn't answer.

"I don't know what to feel right now. It's so emotional," he said. "All I want to do is go see my mom."

And so he did, walking off the podium after his medal ceremony, climbing over a barrier and wading through photographers to hug his mother, Debbie, and sisters Hilary and Whitney.

There were tears. There was laughter. There was his goofy smile. And, with his sisters' outfits matching his latest medal, there was plenty of gold.

"Everything was accomplished, what else could I do?" he said.

He was surely asking himself that same question when he dove into the water today, his team in third place, his final effort forced to be a great one.

And so it was, as he swam the butterfly leg faster than anyone, giving the U.S. team the lead, putting history in the freestyling strokes of Jason Lezak.

"To be honest, I was thinking, `don't blow the lead,' " Lezak said.

He didn't, and now the race will live as long as those eight gold medals, the final chapter in a book that will probably never be rewritten.

"In my opinion, we'll never see it again," said Australian swimmer Grant Hackett.

It was, of course, a wonder that we ever saw it in the first place.

Phelps entered the meet as a 23-year-old dork with an unsettling Fu Manchu who was on the verge of either major history or giant collapse.

In his career, after every big stroke forward, it seemed he would suffer a belly flop.

He won six gold medals in the 2004 Olympics in Athens.

But a couple of months later, he was arrested for driving while intoxicated, and later pleaded guilty to driving while impaired.

Three years later, he won seven gold medals and set five world records in the 2007 world championships in Melbourne, Australia.

But that winter, in circumstances that still haven't been revealed, the superbly coordinated athlete inexplicably stumbled and broke his wrist.

"It's over," he told his coach, Bob Bowman, at the time. "I'm finished."

He was not finished. As the world has seen since he arrived in Beijing last week, he is never finished.

He lost the Fu Manchu. He kept the dork.

And in one of the most gloriously individual weeks in the history of sports, lumbering and grinning and splashing through the Water Cube like a kid at summer swimming camp, he found himself.

"I'm sort of in a dream world," he said this weekend.

He was not alone. We were floating alongside him, it seemed, in race after race, gold after gold, world record after world record, each splash bigger than the last.

His first gold came with a beautiful swim and a botched song. He won the 400-meter individual medley by nearly three seconds, after which, during the medal ceremony, the taped U.S. national anthem stopped midlyric.

Some athletes would have been offended. Phelps just stood on the podium and laughed. He knew he would be hearing that song again.

His second gold came with a save. He was part of a 400-meter freestyle relay team that survived only when anchorman Jason Lezak mounted a last-lap comeback to beat France's Alain Bernard by a blink.

Phelps, who swam first, wildly led the cheers from the starting blocks, the world learning that the superstar didn't mind being a teammate.

"That's the fun part of all this," Phelps said.

His third gold was a victory from start to finish in the 200-meter freestyle, a third consecutive world record, and on the pool deck, eyebrows began to rise.

"It might be once in a century you see something like that," said teammate Aaron Peirsol. "The way he's attacking the meet, not just winning, but absolutely destroying everything."

Just when Phelps was looking immortal, his fourth gold medal showed he was human. He won the 200-meter butterfly blind, after water filled his goggles for the last two laps.

"To be honest, I was having trouble seeing the walls," he said.

After throwing off his goggles in disgust, he went back to being immortal, winning his fifth gold medal in the 800 freestyle relay—less than hour later.

"Everybody is saying, `How is he doing this?' " said swimmer Pawel Korzeniowski of Poland. "Nobody can believe it."

His sixth gold medal came uneventfully—only with Phelps can a gold medal be uneventful—in the 200-meter individual medley.

Then, saving his best for nearly last, Phelps' seventh gold medal came with a miracle.

Trailing Serbia's Milorad Cavic in the final meters of the 100-meter butterfly, Phelps caught him with several giant strokes and beat him to the wall by the smallest record margin in the sport.

One-hundredth of a second.

"I'm at a loss for words," Phelps said at the time.

By now, we all are.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Tampa Bay	74	48	.607	–
Boston	71	52	.577	3 1/2
New York	65	58	.528	9 1/2
Toronto	63	60	.512	11 1/2
Baltimore	59	63	.484	15

Central Division

Chicago	69	53	.566	–
Minnesota	69	53	.566	–
Detroit	60	63	488	9 1/2
Cleveland	55	67	451	14
Kansas City	55	68	447	14 1/2

West Division

Los Angeles	76	45	628	–
Texas	62	62	.500	15 1/2
Oakland	56	66	.459	20 1/2
Seattle	46	76	.377	30 1/2

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

New York	67	56	545	–
Philadelphia	65	58	.528	2
Florida	64	60	516	3 1/2
Atlanta	56	67	.455	11
Washington	44	80	.355	23 1/2

Central Division

Chicago	75	48	.610	–
Milwaukee	71	53	.573	4 1/2
St. Louis	70	56	.556	6 1/2
Houston	62	61	.504	13
Pittsburgh	55	68	.447	20
Cincinnati	54	70	.435	21 1/2

West Division

Arizona	64	59	.520	–
Los Angeles	63	60	.512	1
Colorado	56	69	.448	9
San Francisco	51	71	.418	12 1/2
San Diego	48	75	.390	16

Yesterday's Games

N.Y. Yankees 3, Kansas City 2
L.A. Angels 4, Cleveland 3
Chicago White Sox 2, Oakland 1
Minnesota 7, Seattle 6
Toronto 4, Boston 1
Detroit 5, Baltimore 3
Texas 3, Tampa Bay 0
N.Y. Mets 7, Pittsburgh 4
Arizona 11, Houston 5
Florida 2, Chicago Cubs 1
Atlanta 11, San Francisco 5
Colorado 13, Washington 6
St. Louis 9, Cincinnati 3
San Diego 8, Philadelphia 3
Milwaukee 4, L.A. Dodgers 3

The Week in Sports

Netters, anglers make headlines

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Ji Hoon Heo finished second in the boys' 18-under age group of last weekend's 2008 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships in Lautoka, Fiji.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Thea Minor finished third in the girls' 13-under age group of last weekend's 2008 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships in Lautoka, Fiji.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Mayuko Arriola finished fifth in the girls' 18-under age group of last weekend's 2008 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships in Lautoka, Fiji.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Rafael Jones finished fourth in the boys' 13-under age group of last weekend's 2008 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships in Lautoka, Fiji.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The past two weeks saw CNMI bets making their marks here and off-island.

Last week, the islands' top junior netters competed in the 2008 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships held at the Robin Mitchell Regional Tennis Centre in Lautoka, Fiji, with Ji Hoon Heo giving the CNMI its best finish in the annual tournament.

Heo was runner-up to Lorenzo Pineda of Vanuatu in the boys' 18-under division, duplicating his feat in the 2007 edition of the PJOC.

Girls' 13-under player Thea Minor finished third, while Rafael Jones and Christian Miller were ranked fourth and eighth in the same age group. Mayuko Arriola placed fifth in the girls' 18-and-under category.

The CNMI netters competed against the top junior players in the Pacific, including those from powerhouse New Caledonia.

Two weekends ago, Saipan Fishermen's Association hosted the 24th Annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament, which drew participants from Guam and Tinian.

Cabo Express of captain and Rep. Heinz Hofshneider claimed the Grand Prize trophy for the second straight year with its 484-lb. marlin, the heaviest single catch in the tournament.

Not to be outdone was another Saipan boat, *MV Gloria II*, which caught a record-breaking 52.85-lb. wahoo.

MARK RABAGO

Rep. Heinz Hofschneider, right, captain of *Cabo Express* and his crew pose with the 484-lb. marlin they caught in Day 1 of the 24th Annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament held last Aug. 9.

MARK RABAGO

Cabo Express captain Heinz Hofshneider and his anglers pose with their giant trophy after winning the grand prize in the 24th Annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament during the awards banquet held Monday night at Hyatt Regency Saipan.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Four-time perfect gamer Robert Talavera reasserted his mastery of the Saipan Bowling Center after topping the Classified Masters Bowling Tournament held last Aug. 10.

MARK RABAGO

Ford Rangers slugger goes up to bat in Game 3 of their 2008 Budweiser Saipan Major League semifinals against the Tanapag Falcons last Aug. 9 at the Francisco M. Palacios Baseball Field.

MARK RABAGO

Louie Sunga won the Championship Flight of the 13th Tournament of Champions after firing a two-day score of three-over par 147 at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort.

Other events in the past weeks worth mentioning were the naming of four track and field athletes as NMASA's top athletes for June, the TOC winners, and the CNMI Junior Nationals Team.

Jack Kabriel, Yvone Bennette, Trevor Ogumoro and Jacque Wonenberg were named June's best athletes after their performance in the 2008 Oceania Grand Prix Championships at the Oleai Sports Complex, two months ago.

Kabriel won a silver in the 3,000m steeplechase, setting a new CNMI record of with a record-breaking time of 12 minutes, 20.07 seconds, thus earning the NMASA Male Athlete of the Month.

Bennett notched the NMASA Female Athlete of the Month award after shattering three CNMI marks.

Wonenberg took one gold, one silver, and two bronzes in the Oceania tournament, while Ogumoro netted a silver, giving them the NMASA Student Athletes of the Month plum.

Over at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort, Guam's George Tydingco stole the show from Saipan parbusters, as he made a hole-in-one shot on the No. 15 hole in the east course.

Another Guamanian outclassed Saipan's top golfers, as Louie Sunga ruled the centerpiece Championship Flight. Other flight winners were Jin Ahn (A Flight), Luis Byun (B Flight), Mel Grey (C Flight), Edward Manibusan (Seniors Flight), Lito Mendoza (Super Seniors Flight), and Noriko Togawa (Ladies Low Gross).

The past two weeks also saw Ford Rangers and pennant champions Rock Steady battle each other and frequent power outages as the 2008 Budweiser Saipan Major League best-of-five championship kicked off.

Robert Talavera also returned to his championship form after winning the Inaugural Classified Masters Bowling Tournament held last Aug. 10. at the Saipan Bowling Center in San Jose.

With the 2008 FIBA Oceania Youth Tournament kicking off next month, coach Rufino Aguon also named the CNMI Junior Na-

Netters, anglers make headlines

The past two weeks saw CNMI bets making their marks here and off-island. Last week, the islands' top junior netters competed in the 2008 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships held at the Robin Mitchell Regional Tennis Centre.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Favre tosses TD pass in Jets debut

Brett Favre proved he's a quick study. The New York Jets' new quarterback also showed he has plenty of zip remaining in that rocket right arm.

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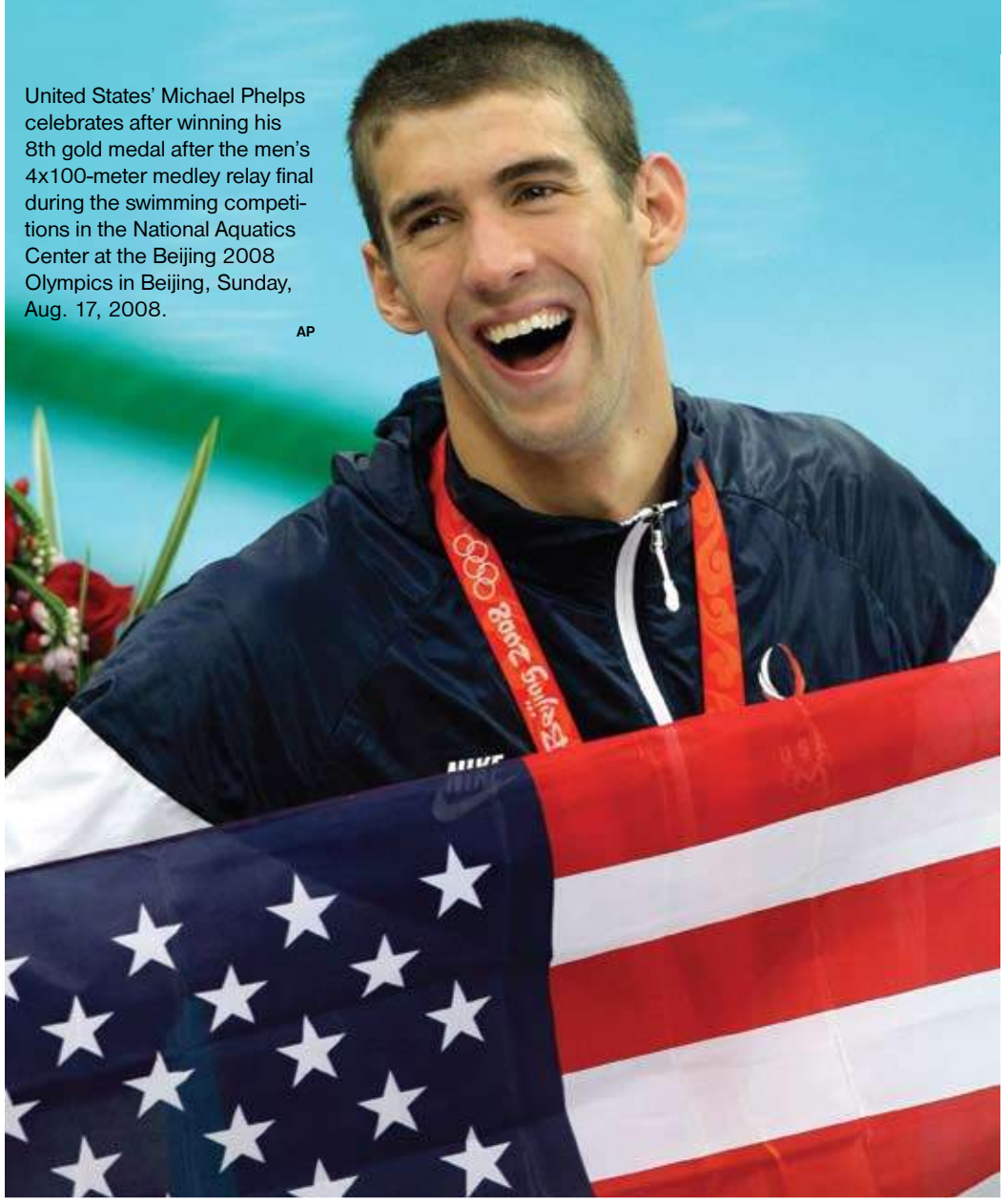
Phelps wins 8th gold; breaks tie with Spitz



United States' Michael Phelps celebrates after winning his 8th gold medal after the men's 4x100-meter medley relay final during the swimming competitions in the National Aquatics Center at the Beijing 2008 Olympics in Beijing, Sunday, Aug. 17, 2008.

AP

By PAUL NEWBERRY
AP NATIONAL WRITER

Michael Phelps locked arms with his three teammates, as though they were in a football huddle calling a play, then hugged each one of them. It took a team to make him the grandest of Olympic champions. And one last big push from Phelps himself.

Going hard right to the end of a mesmerizing nine days in Beijing, Phelps helped the Americans come from behind Sunday in a race they've never lost at the Olympics, cheering from the deck as Jason Lezak brought it home for a world record in the 400-meter medley relay. It was Phelps' history-making eighth gold medal of these games.

"Everything was accomplished," he said. "I will have the medals forever."

Phelps sure did his part to win No. 8, eclipsing Mark Spitz's seven-gold performance at the 1972 Munich Games.

Aaron Peirsol got the Americans off to the lead in the backstroke, but Brendan Hansen—a major disappointment in this Olympic year—slowed them down with only the third-fastest breaststroke leg.

By the time Phelps dived in for the butterfly, the U.S. was trailing Australia and Japan.

That's when he really went to work.

With his long arms whirling across the water like propellers, Phelps caught the two guys ahead of him on the return lap and passed off to Lezak a lead of less than a second for the freestyle. The Australians countered with former world record-holder Eamon Sullivan as their anchor.

"I was thinking not to blow the lead," Lezak said. "I was really nervous."

Sullivan tried to chase down Lezak and appeared to be gaining as they came to the wall, but Lezak finished in 3 minutes, 29.34 seconds—Phelps' seventh world record in his personal Great Haul of China.

The Aussies took silver in 3:30.04, also under the old world record of 3:30.68 set by the U.S. in Athens four years ago, while Japan held on for the bronze.

Phelps leaned over the blocks, looking to make sure Lezak touched first. Assured the Americans had won, he thrust both index fingers in the air, pumped his right arm and let out a scream. Peirsol

See PHELPS on Page 26

RELATED NEWS
US men's hoops hammers Spain
PAGE 26

NMC hands PTI first loss

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The power at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium went off for the nth time Friday night, but fortunately the second game in the Inaugural PTI Inter-Government/Business Basketball League was already finished with Northern Marianas College nailing an 87-82 victory over PTI.

A few minutes after the final buzzer sounded, darkness filled the gym, leaving players, officials, and spectators scrambling for their things as they prepared to exit the venue. On Wednesday and Thursday night, games in the PTI caging were called off due to power outage.

At the resumption of the league Friday night, PTI absorbed its first loss in nine games, forcing them to share the lead in the 11-team field with NMC.

NMC's lone loss was against the Department of Corrections.

The Rufino Aguon-coached NMC held PTI to four points in the first six minutes of the third period to recover from a 47-49 halftime deficit and take the lead at the end of the third period, 71-58.

Guards Jose Tumaquip and Joe Villacrusis helped turn things around for NMC, as they connected on several long jumpers in the third canto.

Tumaquip drilled 11 of his 14 points in the third quarter, while Villacrusis had nine. They made one triple each in the third period and pressured PTI's guards at the backcourt, preventing their foes to set up its offense efficiently.

Elmer Esdrelon was particularly frustrated by the pesky defense of NMC guards. After firing four triples in the first half, Esdrelon was held to a field goal and two free throws in the third period and was scoreless in the

See NMC on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

NMC's Jerry Diaz (18) goes for a shot against the outstretched arms of PTI's Brad Ruzsala (34) during their game in the PTI Inter-Government/Business Basketball League Friday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. NMC won, 87-82, handing PTI its first loss in the tournament.

Early rematch for Jr. Nationals, Sonics in Rotary opening today

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The 2008 Saipan Rotary Club Youth Basketball League will kick off today with a game featuring last season's finalists the CNMI Junior Nationals and the Southern Sonics.

Game time is at 5:30pm at the Gilbert C. Ada Gym.

The Junior Nationals are this year's defending champion in the 18-and-under league, as they prevailed over the Sonics in last season's championship game, 98-91. The Rufino Aguon-mentored Junior Nationals advanced to the finals after dethroning the G-Rollers I in the semifinals, 76-73, while the Sonics claimed the second finals ticket after downing the San Antonio Sixers, 94-88.

The semifinalists in last year's Rotary caging will battle for the championship trophy this season, along with four other teams, namely the G-Rollers II, Capital Hill, the G-Stars and the Kagman Suns.

The Juniors Nationals will miss several players who were part of the champion team last

See EARLY on Page 26

Michael Phelps swims into history

By BILL PLASCHKE
(c) 2008, Los Angeles Times

History came with not a splash, but a struggle.

In the deepest Olympic waters, minutes from a remote golden shore, Michael Phelps was not a speedboat, he was a tugboat.

History came only when he dragged us there.

In front a Water Cube crowd that roared in disbelief Sunday morning, Phelps kicked a losing U.S. 400-meter relay team from third to first place during his butterfly leg, then climbed out of the pool and wearily cheered as Jason Lezak's freestyle finished the job in world-record time.

That figure—3:29.24—will be soon forgotten.

The number of gold medals won by Phelps at these Olympics—eight—will live forever.

Magical in China, mystical in U.S. swimming circles, the number eight makes Phelps the greatest single-Olympics athlete in history, breaking the record of seven gold medals held for 36 years by swimmer Mark Spitz.

Eight golds, seven world records, 17 races over nine days, one of the greatest feats by any athlete ever.

Immediately after which, his face contorted, his eyes narrow, Phelps punched the air in what looked like relieved pain.

"It's been such an unbelievable roller coaster; it's been such an unbelievable ride," Phelps said. "With so many people saying it couldn't be done, all it took was a little imagination."

See MICHAEL on Page 26